

NEW MODES

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 1 | Aired on 09.25.2008

The Manhattan Project - Betty takes steps to be a *Modern* professional woman, Daniel inches his way toward adulthood, and Wilhelmina continues to blow her personal brand of sunshine all over your face.

You know what? Let's just forget last season ever happened. Firstly because I'd love to, and secondly because... the show did. But to review: Mysterious French bastard kid, Claire's getting *Hot Flash* off the ground, Daniel's out and Wilhelmina is in as *Mode* EIC, Christina's pregnant with the spawn of Wili and the House of Meade, and Alexis has become both evil and retarded. The scariest combination of all.

Oh, and our heroine was "somehow" supposed to choose between a manipulative, judgmental dwarf, and a hot-as-hell nerd man who was so very unattainable that he invented new coincidental ways to be unattainable on a weekly basis, like getting people in New Mexico pregnant on his day off. In order to reboot the franchise before Betty managed to become completely, instead of mostly, irritating and unlikeable -- and because Gorham wasn't interested in moving to NYC just so his character mutations could continue to embarrass us all -- she Chose Me.

Not literally Me, like, "me" in the grand sense of Choosing Oneself. (Just like Potes said. She would never tell you this, being humble as well as lovely, but Potes is ... *magic*. I once saw a unicorn walk up to Potes on Rodeo Drive and ask her advice, and she totally played it off like it was no big deal. A goddamn unicorn.) Anyway, Betty's right now explaining this to an unseen apostrophe, somewhere outdoors with the city behind her, all about how she "had a choice to make" and: "then it hit me: literally, a softball hit me."

I don't really remember last season that well because it was mostly dumb except for Amanda and Mark, who were fierce the whole time because dumb is the name of the country where they excel. So I can't recall if any of this already happened, and there's a dependent clause in the finale recap that's throwing me off. So feel free to skip this paragraph, as she tells Henry (In a dream? Due to concussion?) that, while she loves him as passionately and deeply and hotly as any right-thinking human, she cannot marry him; then she tells Gio (In a memory? A flight of fancy?) that she cares about Gio, but not actually in that way.

Ah. The apostrophe is her dead mom. What is with this show and the downer openers? She explains to Mom that there is a lot she wants to experience before she settles into a relationship -- such as short-term mini-relationships with fine-ass singer-songwriters and the like -- but also in terms of non-relationships, like her career and grownupness and all the infinite things that would, and did, suffer due to Henry's unbelievably yucky babymama drama, and Gio's sandwichery and dwarven feelings of inferiority and whatever, and Betty's complete loss of all the things -- optimism, morals, focus, faith, compassion, resourcefulness, direction, willpower -- that make her my hero.

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Betty makes kind of a powerful point here about how her Mom spent her entire life sacrificing to make sure that she and Hilda and Ignacio were happy, and between her

husband getting murdered and her getting pregnant with the killer, then escaping across the border with him into the United States*, she never got to know what it was like to work it on a runway, get an overpriced apartment in Manhattan, go bicycling with lesbian survivors, or all the other meaningful things that make life living. All that dumb bitch did was raise a couple of beautiful, intelligent, strong daughters, make a wonderful home for them, then die. What a waste! Never even saw an iPhone. Or Eddie Cibrian's ass.

America Forever is a powerhouse when it comes to acting this kind of stuff, not to mention how weird it must be to do this whole emotional monologue without anybody but a headstone to talk to. She kind of breaks down a little bit talking about how it's time to figure out who she is, by specifically herself, without a bunch of horseshit going on. She doesn't know what she's going to find, but she knows where to start. She puts a picture of Ignacio and Mom on the abundant heap of lovely flowers at the grave, says goodbye to her Mom, and then the unmistakably exciting chords of "Roam" (See? *Magic*) start up over the title card.

(*It's possible I invented some, or all, of this.)

The screen goes scratchy like an old-time moviola and then it's a bunch of postcards of Betty visiting all kinds of lame clichéd places like the Grand Canyon and great big balls of twine or some shit. But then, if our positions were reversed and I was touring *her* native lands, I would totally be going to the Statue of Liberty and looking for Hubbell outside the Plaza and stalking Tim Gunn and whatever shameless touristy stuff. My new dream job is to give [Gossip Girl](#) bus tours, like, "Coming up on your right you'll see one of Chuck Bass's favorite spots for raping people..."

Anyway, it goes on for like the entire length of the song, and a pattern develops regarding Betty's fondness for ... bicycling lesbians? I wish that it had been some other song, because that song is overused and cheesy and literal. What about -- given our guest star particularly -- "Oh My God" by Mark Ronson? Same idea, but less '90s-fierce. Which is not fierce at all. She shows Hilda and Justin a picture of herself and "Peg" eating -- given our guest star particularly -- "clam chowder," in San Francisco. Man, after you've had Grubstick I guess there's no point in driving stick at all. Justin, proving that drag queens v. lesbians is intrinsic from birth, like handedness or ninjas v. pirates, smarts off about "that's a lady?!" Hilda rightfully smacks him one, but remains privately concerned about Betty's new ... directions.

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Betty ... this part is weird because it's like a Mark and Amanda scene where they say something incredibly fucked up but really fast so you have to rewind it, except what she's saying isn't hilarious, just weird, as she explains in one sentence that somehow, while traveling across the country, she fell in with bicycling lesbians who have survived illnesses. Because sometimes that happens, I guess. In certain areas of the northern Midwest they just roam free, I heard. Survivor lesbians are the hardiest type of bicyclists there are. They are friendly and fun to talk to and very helpful, but just remember not to ever call anybody a "pussy" or a "bitch" in front of them, even jokingly, because you will spend the rest of the day being educated about some things.

Betty wants to tell their stories in *Mode*, along with other ideas she has had, and trapped for keeping in a big Betty-bling binder with a lightbulb on the front of it. Justin loves all of this, because since he spends the entire episode sitting in a chair he has to emote in new ways.

Hilda is weirded out by Brand New Betty, and starts perseverating on a hideous turquoise dove pendant around her neck. Oh, yes: that's her power animal. It embodies the feminine energies of peace and maturity. Having grown up in New Mexico and Arizona, I can tell you that the first person who says "power animal" to me is getting punched in the face.

Hilda asks if, pursuant to a greater question she has yet to corner, this too was a gift from Peg. "No, she said *feminine* energy," Justin says. Justin is full of hate crimes today. Betty starts to tell them about her plans, but then Ignacio comes into the living room wearing a burger place uniform. Apparently, Betty's trip around the liminal spaces of America and her own sexuality has inspired him to flip burgers. That's ... much like a compliment, Ignacio. Randomly, he discovers his name Bedazzled onto the back in a hugely ghetto fashion, but Justin's logic is unassailable: "I was trying to put the 'U' in 'uniform'!" It's exactly this dedication to being himself and standing out in a crowd and marching to his own disco beat that's going to get Justin murdered.

Everybody takes this non-opportunity to awkwardly start cross-talking and yelling at each other for no reason other than so that Betty can yell really loud and they all stop talking again. OMG, that was as hilarious and fresh as it is in every movie and TV show, ever. What's more disappointing than lazy bullshit writing filler like that? Watching Betty build castles in the sky about her coping skills and self-reliance, and then knock them down. So here is Betty's plan. Which by the way is written on a placemat or something, in crayon, plus apparently Betty has the handwriting of the Unabomber as a little child:

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Firstly, Betty's going to get a promotion at *Mode* within the year, by working hard and staying focused. Note how she leaves out two essential building blocks for reaching this goal. Firstly, she forgot the part about "not getting sucked into Wilhelmina's ridiculously baroque schemes," which science shows is 73% of the reason Betty's in her third year with the same job title. And secondly, she completely forgot what should be Rule Number One, which is "NO HELPING MEADES DO ANYTHING EVER," because that inevitably and inexorably leads to her ruin, usually within minutes. Just stay off the Hell Bus of Meade Family Bullshit and you will be fine.

Two. No romantic entanglements. Which would be fine, if they meant it, but they don't. I mean, she got rid of the two albatrosses but that doesn't mean she's going to avoid romantic entanglements; beautiful boys with sick bodies will continue to throw themselves at her in every episode of this show, or else we all stop watching. I like that Betty's got the spotlight back on herself, but this shit is starting to seem kinda lofty.

Three: moving out. To a New! Apartment! In The City! Every time this phrase or something similar is uttered, drink. I like the idea of Betty living by herself, not because I don't love her family, but it's like Betty, you're what, thirty-six? Thirty-seven? Come on now. Hilda and Ignacio are none too impressed, of course, but Justin throws down some feminine energies the likes of which you've never seen.

Ignacio and Betty fight their way down the street toward the burger place, and he's all over how she can't afford a NATC and she's not ready for a NATC and basically acting like it's NATC Germany and then in this corner she's like, "I saved money and rode bicycles! With lesbians! I'm a grownup!" Points for talking about her lost innocence on the biking trip, but no. Betty's wearing: a flowery dress that makes her look fat, hair that is easily three feet

across but basically a variation on her usual hair, and canary yellow socks. She's fairly presentable right now, actually.

"Experiencing things, that's the whole point! Like trans-American lady love!" He tells her she's being naïve, which she totally is, and she freezes him out, which is also correct. Her face is still getting thinner, which makes the fake braces jut out more like a TV vampire, which in turn makes her look like a Lynda Barry character. Ignacio takes off and heads into the burger place; his boss is Kimmie Keagan, Betty's high-school torturer.

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Kimmie confirms that he was talking to his daughter, the one with the job at *Mode* and that took the big trip, and then suddenly she flips the script on him about how they can't be chitchatting and corporate is "all up in [her] grill about hygiene" -- which is the last place, in terms of irony, they would be, generally speaking -- so he's off the fryer and onto the toilets. I love Lindsay Lohan. I wish she would stop fighting herself and go back to being awesome, don't you? She's a great actor, she has freckles and poorface, and she's really smart plus queer: automatic next Jodie Foster. It's been clear since she was about fifteen. And yet somehow she keeps dodging that magic crystal ball in order to act like a methed-up teenage boy in a Camaro, and it pisses me off.

Betty tells the elevator, whilst white-knuckling her Idea Notebook, that *Mode* best get ready for Betty. When she gets off the elevator to a winding-down soundtrack, everything's different and scary. It's really cold, everything is Bipolar Expedition white and Heart Of Darkness black, including the clothes of every shivering person. I always pictured the inside of Wili looking something like this. Or somehow combined with a hunting and game theme, like leather wallpaper and mooseheads and rifles all over the place. (OMG that makes Wilhelmina the cooler, less evil version of Sarah Palin!)

"New *Mode* Magazine, how may I direct your call?" Amanda sounds shuddery and weird, because of how it's all dystopian. Betty calls out to her and she ... vaults across the foyer towards Betty, babbling about quasi-missing Betty, and forgetting "how big" she is. Heh. Betty asks why it's so cold and Amanda says "She" likes it that way because it keeps everybody sharp. Then Mark runs up telling Amanda that "She" will destroy you if you don't at least look busy while you're fucking around, and he notices Betty and starts palpating her face. "Is it real? Am I hallucinating?"

They surround her with terrifying hugs and practically carry her down the hall. It seems partially that she's radiating heat that they desperately need. Amanda compares her to a "long-lost teddy bear" and Mark rubs her upper arm: "Furry!"

...HEY. Where *is* Cliff, now that you mention it? He was the only good thing of last year. Is he really gone forever?

Anyway, she asks why they're being so creepy/nice and they say it's because she reminds them of the good old days, how when she was there she could be counted upon to "say something weird" or "wear something hideous," and Amanda notices the ugly power animal, grabbing at it. "We can say so many things about that!" Mark squeals. But before they can get started -- or hear the delicious Sapphic tale of its acquisition, which would blow their mean little hearts with its awesome potential -- the click-clack of Fall '08

Manolos sends everybody scurrying like the rent is due and Miranda Priestley's the landlord.

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Ooh! You know what I just noticed? We've never really had that story. Fey Sommers died before the show started, and then it's just been Daniel, with occasional interference from cartoony villains. We've never had the full-on real-life experience of Lady Editrix going off on people. (And while I think Amanda will eventually be crowned in some capacity, I don't think she'll ever turn into her mother. She's too nice, not to mention a functioning schizophrenic.) So I just stopped caring if Daniel ever gets *Mode* back.

Betty heads into Daniel's office, but it's been transformed into a creepy black and white devil baby room. It's awesome, there's like a gothic crib in the center of the room illuminated by evil and a creepy lace ... mosquito net thing. There are thousands of black and white teddybears (Clliiifffftffff!) everywhere you look, and then a sledgehammer comes through the wall, and needless to say it's wielded by Wili, who has decided the contractors aren't doing the job right. She talks about putting in a window, so there will always be light on her little angel, and then spots Betty through the new hole in the wall: "Oh my. It's back." She informs Betty about the change of masthead and sends her downstairs to Daniel's new offices.

Which are sterily grotesque in a *Zoolander* halfpipe scooteriffic kind of "zoomazoomzoom anna boomboom" way, which is to say a cliché, but maybe this time it's on purpose. I never know with Daniel. It's basically like a cross between your imaginary Google campus and your imaginary Maxim campus, but with women included. The magazine's called *Player* and its offices are raucously themed in Arrested Latency orange, Seventies Bush Is Back black, and Don't Tase Me Bro red.

Daniel comes running up in a track suit that is clearly evil in that it is less tailored, if you see what I'm saying, than usual: He's always been 40% pectoral. Daniel's in a bad, bad way. He explains to Betty about how Alexis has become so unrecognizable and unbearable that Romijn is quitting, but before doing so she and her giant circus tits are now evil, so he's out. Betty's flummoxed and calls *Player* "smutty," but Daniel defensively justifies that *Player* is "the third best-selling, no-nudity men's magazine," behind I assume GQ and *Esquire*, so really he should express the numbers a little differently: by my count that makes it the number one best-selling *straight* men's magazine.

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"Don't I look relaxed?" he asks. Because he was such a workaholic before becoming King of Douchetown. Betty says yes, distastefully and missing the muscles, and gives thumbs up to his sad, toolish little toolstache. He says also, this is going to give him time to hang with his son. (Dress him up like Marie Antoinette and such, probably.) Betty asks why he didn't tell her about any of these huge changes that affect her entire life, and he looks at the (I guess?) Amanda of *Player*, a Hooters girl name of Ginger, who says "they" meaning "she" left Betty a "lot" of messages. Betty asks what number "they" were using, and Ginger hands it over on a piece of scrap paper. Funniest line of the episode not involving Mark? "This is six numbers and the letter P!"

Daniel introduces Betty to everybody and they boo at her, then howl and cheer for Ginger's booty dance. One of them asks if Betty's his "beeyotch," which Daniel explains is code for "assistant." Whatever, it's dumb, they're cartoons but that's the fratty point, Betty asks what he needs and he tells Ginger to give her the lay of the land, she was once voted Lay Of The Land. Aaaaand I'm done with *Player*! Just like that. This is dumb. This is like what John Wells would think is hip and happening. *INT: PLAYER MAGAZINE. Young hip urban slacker professionals are dapping each other with their fists, playing pinball games, skateboarding. N.B.: Have we thought about changing the title to PLAYA?*

Wilhelmina uncompliments Claire's perfume, calling it "musky," and Claire suggests that Wili bite her. Awesome. On the other side of Claire's pod of *Hot Flash* cubes, there's Alexis's office, where Wili wants more money. Alexis compares her *New Mode* launch budget to that of the next Harry Potter film, wherein Snape and Dumbledore tenderly and nervously do it while floating on a cloud of magic. (Spoiler alert!) Wili explains that she needs to completely erase the concept or memory of Daniel from this earth so that people will understand *Mode* no longer sucks.

Alexis blows her off, and tells her also that the giant billboard she wants is going to *Hot Flash* instead, because it's not an establish brand of any particular stripe yet. "I'm cutting you off," she says, and just as Wili's about to grab the nearest Clio and bash her over the head with it, Mark appears and whisks her onto an elevator, offering a comforting susurrus of Wilhelmina's Favorite Things: "Macaroons, Sade, Karl Rove..." (This is the kind of thing I was talking about before, because while you're asking yourself if he really just said "Wilhelmina's Favorite Things," part of your brain is hearing him say "macaroons," and while that's processing a third part is actually getting the punchline.) The woman exiting the elevator falls on her face for no visible reason, and once inside Wili screeches wildly because of something (presumably a *Hot Flash* cover) on the elevator onscreen.

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Mark offers to slap her out of her shock, but she grabs his wrist in the nick of time with her viper-like reflexes and points at what is indeed a *Hot Flash* cover, with Claire looking *just ridiculous*, like if you imagine yourself as a housewife in 1982 dreaming of being a romance novelist, that is what your author photo would look like, basically. On a yacht wearing a very flowy gown in Post-Menstrual raspberry. A vicious idea forms in Wilhelmina's mind like the Demon Seed of Slater-Meade in a drunken Scottish womb.

Oh! Speaking of. Christina looks fucking gorgeous, by the way, walking through the streets with Betty and trying to slap a happy face on the whole *Playa* thing. She says she's starving and wants falafel, even though it makes her gassy, which is fine because she's pregnant so apparently she can fart in public *and* talk about it in public. I think Christina just set an all-time record for how long it takes me to get tired of her shtick. She's like the [Sookie St. James](#) of this show: no justification for my hatred of her at all. Only shame about how unnecessary it is. Betty drags poor, underused, gorgeous annoying Christina toward the NATC of her dreams -- which is right above a falafel shop. If Christina farts in this episode I am telling you: I am through. Shortest assignment ever.

Hilda and Coach Tony bask in the afterglow of fucking, on a loveseat, in a family living room, under a crocheted blanket, near a street-level window. Gross. I know the Cibrian cannot be denied, but you couldn't hit the stairs? Or the floor? Or anywhere besides that couch, which I always imagined smelled like chorizo anyway? Um, this scene exists mainly to remind you

that Tony is married and lying To The Vanilla Ice Extreme about how he's getting a divorce, etc. lying etc. like they always do, and they keep having romantic seconds that are ripped away by the wife's annoying ringtone.

I used to like Hilda the most out of anybody on this show besides the obvious Betty, but: if he says he's going to leave his wife? You say "Great, see you then." Anything else is a lack of self-control -- which is disgusting -- or you're in denial and secretly know that he never will -- which is even more disgusting. Both ways, the only person you're disrespecting is yourself.

The apartment in which Christina is probably about to fart is bright yellow -- Psycho Canary yellow and not Limoncello Yacht Morning yellow, or even I Can Easily Believe That It's Butter yellow -- which as the most horrible color of all time is also Betty's favorite. Christina goes all Debbie Downer about how somebody else is going to get it, then talks loud annoying Scottish shit about the apartment and chases off another couple, then it's back to going negative all over Betty about the apartment, can she afford it, what will she do, but all this wisdom is nothing compared to the shit-covered vermin that lands on the windowsill right then.

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"It's my power animal," Betty moans in awe, and Christina's like, "Um, it's a pigeon." Betty, dorking out even in comparison to her usual self, talks pigeon at the thing while brandishing her power animal at it like some lost episode of *Les Mystérieuses Cités d'Or*, as DJ probably knows it, and she's about to unlock the freaky Mayan power of the pigeon.

Some girl snatches the place out from under her, and then the real estate agent -- whose stereotypical *Star Wars* ching-chong racist Yellow Peril accent varies widely from moment to moment -- scares Betty into taking a completely different apartment, sight unseen, on a higher floor. Christina, distracted by thoughts of falafel and flatulence to come, apparently forgets to babysit Betty's stupid ass for five seconds, and suddenly Betty is totally down. This is apparently because she has to live here or in the immediate vicinity due to her spirit animal being in the window. Betty Suarez, sometimes your spirit animal is retardedness. This is one of those times.

Hilda carts a box up five flights of stairs toward Betty's apartment, and they are both nearly dying by the time they get there. Betty says this way she won't even have to go to the gym, which she doesn't do anyway, blah blah blah, all you get when you play to the cheap seats is stupid viewers. Here's what I think: they're going to act like it's a shithole, and scream and yell, but the obvious architectural beauty of the apartment, and the amount of light it gets, are not things that can be cosmetically altered really for this phase of the story, so it's going to strike false when they act like it's some kind of abattoir.

Unless it is actually covered in blood, or feces, you can't fake a good apartment, and I can't see this show going there no matter how realistic it would be. Then Betty will whine for awhile but eventually she'll pull herself up by her bootstraps and take control of her life via her environment, and it will be beautiful, and they'll play either "Dancing With Myself" or "Suddenly I See," and she will dance around her apartment and claim her space, and we will all learn a little something about self-acceptance and not bitching about totally cute NATC. If I'm wrong, this show rocks. If I'm right...?

...Um, it's totally cute. There's a small puddle, and a questionable mattress, but architecturally it's awesome and the windows are larger than a Honda Fit. Fuck this! Betty, who's clearly months later still struggling with the aftereffects of getting beamed by a softball, has the nerve to be confused: "It's supposed to look exactly like the other one!" IT DOES, YOU HALFWIT.

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Okay, to be fair: the promised "sexy views" include Ugly Naked Midlife Neighbors ("That is not sexy! Or sanitary!"), the refrigerator contains something dreadful yet unknowable, and there's a bathtub in the exact middle of the room. That's iffy. But the rest ... It's the loveliest shade of Heywood-Wakefield green. Hilda finally twigs to how she got it sight unseen, wonders if the previous occupant was murdered, and gets Betty to admit she spent her money on the place. As in all of it. In the world.

Hilda goes off for some reason I don't get about how dare Betty spend the money that she earned her own damn self when Hilda is poor, Ignacio is poor, Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae are poor, etc. "We are struggling! And you throw it all away?"

That's where I would ask Hilda to leave my house, honestly. "All you did was fight harder than anyone ever has to educate yourself, leave Queens, create a new life for yourself, and save the lives of an entire family of rich-ass lunatics. How dare you spend those resources any way you see fit, when your father and sister -- who have in common the motivation and focus of a fucking Ramen-addicted twenty-year-old who can't afford his Ritalin -- working at a burger joint and unable to get it together and overcome paperwork to become an American citizen in the thirty years he's lived here and/or starting ill-advised entrepreneurial failures every five seconds while fucking married men! These things have nothing to do with each other! I am obnoxious and throwing stones in a glass house!"

Anyway, Hilda threatens to call Ignacio and they wrestle over the phone and Betty keeps promising she's going to fix it herself. And to be honest, I'm nearly on Hilda's side but still. Especially when we cut to her sitting in her new office space complaining to her new landlord about how "tricky" it was for the real estate agent to be like, "Hey, do this incredibly stupid thing that even a person with limited life skills would find fishy, okay?"

And I mean, I would do that too. I have done that. I'm sitting in that, as a matter of fact, talking to you now: a house I happily would have signed on without going inside. And I would have been right. I love my house more than any other house in this world. But part of the assumed risk when you buy into something sight-unseen is that *it will absolutely, positively, never ever look like you imagine it looks*, for the very scientific reason that your Imaginer is located in your brain, while *reality* is all around the outside of it.

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Daniel has finally located a fitted tee and some board shorts, which is the last nail in the coffin of my caring if he ever gets back to *Mode*. DJ has glued Betty to her chair, which is not funny, although it's pretty cute when he wheels her into the conference area to talk about the idea binder. A fairly cute-ish dude named Uno offers his thoughts on things, particularly how much he liked the story about the lesbian victims on bicycles. In fact, it's going to be the cover story. I sense an impending "natch."

There it is: the *Playa* angle is that it's going to be a pictorial about six hot girls on motorcycles, hitting all the biggest "party towns" of America. The assembled braintrust of *Playa* gives a heart boo to: diseases, old women, forty-year-old women, etc. What do they not boo? Harley Effin' Davidson. Talk about a brand overhaul. I can't imagine how deep you'd have to go to make motorcycles anything other than 100% Whiskey Tango. So now Betty's heading up the "biker chicks of *Playa*" event at a Harley show tomorrow, since it was her "original concept." Of course, it's Betty and her surfeit of self-esteem we're talking about, so all it takes is a round of applause from all the fake-boobed and goatee/beer-gutted masses, and she's sold.

Wilhelmina goes through looks with the stylists, ripping into them awesomely. "You give me Japanese floral garden kimonos?" (Mark: "More like *kinonos*!" Hee!) Next: "Dragon prints, Margaret? Really? *After all these years*," which is my favorite part of the scene -- like dragon prints are the equivalent of sleeping with somebody's husband -- after this sequence of awesome events: "And thank you, Rodrigo, for the gift of whiteface kabuki makeup. You really put the 'gay' in 'geisha.'" (Mark: "You should all kill yourselves.") I didn't know it until it happened, but it turns out I've been waiting 30.5 years to hear somebody tell somebody they put the "gay" in "geisha."

Wili reminds them all that this is the most important issue of *Mode*, or any magazine or periodical, of all time, and that their families will be killed if they don't perform. Alexis comes in, and Romijn's pregnancy boobs are so distractingly gigantic I've given them names as a sign of respect. The left one is Witch Baby and the right one is Cherokee Bat.

As soon as Alexis and the girls enter, Wili sends Mark off to make a call to Regis [&] Kelly. In fact, it is Gelman who answers -- Wili's crestfall at this fact is a beautiful thing -- and soon enough she's gotten herself (and more importantly Alexis) a booking on *Live*! As though this were exciting or interesting in any way, Alexis goes running around like a total moron pissing herself about "what am I gonna wear?" and bumping into things. I just ... did I completely miss the episode where she shit out her brain? If Romijn weren't already quitting I'd do it on her behalf. I miss *Pepper Dennis* sometimes, I won't lie.

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Mark fans himself hilariously: "...Like taking candy from a tranny." (Which again, would be kinda offensive if we weren't so sure of his power-twink capacity for "taking" "candy" already, if you see what I'm saying and I think that you do, which again leads to: WHERE THE EFF IS CLIFF. Did he die and I don't remember it? Did Mark dump him for being *too smoking hot*? I just can't remember anymore. In my head he was like the lead character besides Betty, and I know that can't be right, so who knows.)

Betty's still on the phone complaining about how stupid she is to a person who does not care, and Amanda and Mark ambush her, begging her to do "something amazingly awful and embarrassing," and of course DJ shoots silly string (EXT: HARLEY SHOW. *Short skirts, chicks on bikes, silly string. You know, all the stuff that gets our viewership off.*) in her stupid face, and she tells Daniel to man up, and he returns the suggestion before running off, and then Ginger runs up babbling about how it's a 411 or a 911 or whatever because they lost the "R" in P-L-A-Y-A to that little French bastard's silly string and now who will represent that lonely, lovely letter. Jesus, really? ...Yeah. That'd be Betty.

Part of what keeps me internally balanced and uncrazed is pretending that Regis Philbin doesn't exist, so simultaneously: this will be quick, and this would be why. They talk about how Wili took over *Mode* from Alexis's fuckup brother (Alexis makes a firm-lipped smile about this and is a total hypocritical idiot); how she had to do this because Alexis is a terrible publisher who thinks with her giant fake boobs and because the only thing stupider than girls is MTFs (still smiling, still repugnant); how Daniel's been moved to *Playa* where the boobs are plentiful and the responsibilities few, which is right in his wheelhouse... What else is there to talk about?

That's right! This is all *aperitif* and *amuse gueule* nastiness before we head to the point, which is torpedoing *Hot Flash*. Regis, as a historically sexist clueless weirdo, says he thought it was a joke, not Claire Meade's pet project, and Regis gets the title: "Oh, it's like menopause! It's a magazine about lady business!" Which, okay, is funny. But not as funny as Kelly's followup: "I know it's real, but I don't necessarily want to read about it." Just like Sarah Palin's family!

Regis gives a real-life example: "*Brittle & Horny: Afraid Your Bones Will Crack In The Sack?*" And then he doesn't say anything else. Nope, nothing at all, no self-deprecating anecdotal comments, nothing of the sort. He just lets that be the punchline, and you should too. Don't fuckin' argue with me: there are things the human heart was built to handle, and then there's Regis's Bone. Cracking. In the Sack.

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Betty gets ready to ride her motorcycle, setting her onboard to the exact latitude and longitude of slapstick embarrassment. "You can do this. You can do anything, you're a dove. A kick-ass dove. It's like a bike, only bigger." Just as she's getting ready to zoomzoomzoom out with the other letters, DJ silly strings her *again* and she drives into a pool of Jell-O with the frolicking bikini trash. Amanda and Mark agree that it was beyond their wildest dreams: "It's magic!" Ginger yells for somebody to call 411.

After *Live!*, Wili brings up a way for Alexis to "stop the bleeding" they just caused for *Hot Flash*, and help *Mode* at the same time. Alexis is reluctantly down, because she's an idiot now and does whatever Wilhelmina wants without question or even really understanding what she's being asked to do.

In the NATC, Betty waits for maintenance to come approximately ... her whole life. Eventually the offices close, and still nothing. She moans and puts her head in her hands, and then total chaos reigns supreme: Generic rock music comes pounding through the walls, Ugly Naked Midlife Couple is suddenly dancing with cocktails, randomly the ceiling starts dripping on her idea book, her spirit pigeons start divebombing her like Tippi. Wow. She eventually escapes into the hallway and looks at her sad, sad three-part plan and kind of rolls around on the floor. Also, her hair has grown to five times its normal bushy density and looks amazingly fucked up.

Hilda calls and tells her to come to the burger place in Queens, and don't tell Ignacio. Once there, Betty gets the 911 on both Kimmie's managerial abuses and the fact that her hair looks like *Cold Case* threw up on it. Hilda prepares to kick Kimmie's ass, noting that she's got her "big" ring on. Heh, that's the Hilda I love. Betty tells her to chill out, but then spots the previously unnamed Kimmie, and remembers the mildly malicious non-bullying she was

subjected to. "She's pure evil," Betty notes, and Hilda again offers to kick her ass. "Stand by," says Betty, and they face off.

Kimmie and Betty say hello in that way where your name is a curseword, and Kimmie informs her that she's not the manager, she's "the onsite senior executive in charge of food operations." Which sounds worse and made up. I hate when they sound worse. I think it's awesome to be a fast food manager because it means you took what God gave you and applied some elbow grease to it. It's a decent wage, and Lindsay Lohan looks totally hot. I'd like to put the "U" in that "uniform," if you know what I... Wait, that's not it, is it? Hang on.

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Anyway, Betty strikes up a convo about how Kimmie's been cutting Ignacio's hours, and Kimmie says this is "pretty much" true, because he is a slacker. Betty disagrees, saying that he's a "hardworking, good person." Both of which are true, I guess. Kimmie offers another theory, that maybe he's just getting old: "What is he, like a hundred?" Kimmie finds the fact that Betty's about to snap hilarious: "What. I'm not a cheeseburger, so I know you're not going to eat me." (Wait 'til you hear about Peg, there, Tiger.) Then they get into a foodfight, and that? Demeans us all. Important points: Kimmie deepfries the idea notebook and says some (*INT: BURGER PLACE. Research shows that clueless white people sometimes co-opt black lingo from twenty years ago, which is funny*) dialogue passably well ("Oh No You Dint!") and Hilda throws a salad bowl at her...

Just as salad's being tossed onto a plate at the Meade family lunch in what appears to be some kind of ... upscale version of Soup Or Salad? Which is not only something of which I had no previous knowledge, but a total impossibility. I frown on this, whatever it is. Claire is talking about how *Hot Flash* is necessary because "we," meaning Claire and people like her, need a forum to discuss "aging, menopause, personal dryness..." Daniel sounds the TMI klaxon and then yells at DJ to eat his *déjeuner* before dessert, DJ's not having it, he gets some Gallic attitude, Daniel asserts himself for the first time ever in his entire life and lo, it is sexy; they fight over the cake and it hits Alexis in the silk shirt which of course hurts her feelings right where her brain used to be, everything goes to hell; the chaotic mess that Meades leave in their wake separately is increased exponentially when they are gathered in one location, the center cannot hold, stay away from the Meades, the end.

Kimmie throws fries at Betty and Hilda straight from the fryer, which is ballsy! Betty shouts, "You mean, *mean person*," which she and Hilda agree is Betty-bodaciously lame, and Betty manages to turn it around on her by saying that "[being a bitch] doesn't come naturally to everyone," and finally a cop comes in and tells them to fucking grow up and stop this stupid scene from proceeding any longer, as a sign of respect to this show's dwindling audience. Kimmie tells them also, obviously, Ignacio is totally fired; Betty rushes her and gets nicked again, and Kimmie just laughs. "How ya like me now, *UGLY BETTY?*" I... like you a lot, Bitchy Kimmie. (Frankly, more than Betty this week. Or last season, from the stupid plagiarism bullshit episode forward.)

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The sad, beautiful music of this show -- That one song with the piano, you know, for when it's sad? I fucking love it -- plays as Daniel sits outside some room waiting for DJ to unlock the door, and confesses to Claire his guilt and confusion about simultaneously not letting DJ be a total shithead, but also not turning into Bradford. Claire points out that DJ's all alone,

mom's in France, and that you're allowed to yell at your kid if it's appropriate. "As long as he knows you'll be there for him tomorrow, it'll be okay."

Mmmmmmm do I not like that. That is not true, and it's evil to say so. By the same token, I know my abusive husband will "be there for me tomorrow" when he sobers up and apologizes, but does that mean either of us have any respect for *me*? How about your treat your child with the respect you'd like him to show other people, and stop writing yourself passes for screaming at him like a frustrated child your own damn self.

Anyway, Claire gets a call and leaves her son to go bitch at her daughter about killing *Hot Flash*. "No, I downsized it. I was going to tell you at dinner..." Before the little French bastard ruined that also. Alexis explains that it just makes sense to turn *Hot Flash* into a quarterly or insert. Quarterly yes, but insert? Where you gonna put it? It's a niche market, which means you can't really bundle it with other stuff so easily. *Mode* more easily than most, but the whole point of Claire's brilliant point about underserved consumers is swallowed up by this strategy.

Claire points out that Alexis's brain has shit the bed and she's just Wili's puppet, and demonstrates how Wili has very quickly fucked Daniel and Claire over, leaving only one Meade to go. Of course, none of this makes any impression because Alexis is too busy staring into space and scratching her belly and wondering if NARS is really that great or if it's like Urban Decay 2.0 and mostly successful because cougars want to say "Orgasm" and "Deep Throat" in public as much as possible*.

Betty apologizes to her Dad for cheating him out of his shitty, demeaning job he never should have taken in the first place, and he agrees that there are better jobs in the world. He asks Betty WTF happened to her today and she goes, "Everything happened to me today. She realizes that she totally regressed and became a moron, starting that very morning and continuing all day: she acted like a stupid idiot child with Kimmie, she got what she (frankly, self-aggrandizingly) refers to as "duped" on the apartment, and her job has taken a huge step backward. She removes her power animal and immediately becomes wise Betty that we love. "You were right, I was being naïve." She says her dreams of having grown up while peddling across America on a bicycle built for two lesbians was merely a fantasy.

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(*This is a very funny joke about cosmetics. I am a little gay myself.)

Ignacio says she's right, because the actual grownup part is what she's doing now, which is dealing with actualities and fallout instead of designing the perfect life on paper and forgetting to build it. "It's not easy, but I know you. *Te conosco*. Right now, these things -- these moments, this -- is growing up." Nice speech, even though he still looks like the creepy Gepetto of all time. Plus extra points for the *Dora The Explorer* moment with translating yourself for no reason. I always yell DRINK! when people do this, which is why I'm always watching *Dora* drunk.

Kimmie is putting the "form" in "uniform" (nope, still not it) when Betty comes in and apologizes, but gets into a linguistic dead end somewhere around the middle and starts drifting towards how it happened because Kimmie Keagan is a cunt. Kimmie's like, "Nice." She apologizes again, and says she accepts Kimmie's hatred of her as a fact of life, but asks

that Kimmie not take it out on Ignacio. (This does not work in real life, ever.) And then things get *tremendously stupid*. Luckily, the dialogue is awesome.

"I don't hate you, I'm just jealous. You have a NATC, a great job, your dad's all proud. Me? Everything's been going downhill since high school. I'm working at this awful job, I have a boyfriend I kinda hate, I'm tired all the time, I looked on the internet and I'm 98% sure I've got Lyme disease." Totally ♥. Perfectly written, perfectly portrayed. "Whatever you do, don't have sex in the woods on Fire Island." Betty thanks her for that helpful advice, and Kimmie goes off about how nothing's ever going to change, and Betty supplies some of her helpful goddamn sunshine about believing in yourself which normally is my favorite part of each episode but now, given that I'm 98% sure Betty has Lyme disease herself, or Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis, rings a little false.

"Don't be afraid to fall flat on your face," she says kind of smarmily: "I do it every day." Yeah. You could also try learning from your mistakes and stop taking candy from strangers and getting in their vans all the time. Kimmie tells her to get Ignacio back at noon, and horrifyingly shows her change of heart by calling him her "best guy on the fryer." I'm sorry, but he is a grown fucking man. Why are they all treating him like Leonardo Di Caprio in *Gilbert Grape*? "Good Ignacio. *Bueno trabajando*." DRINK!

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That little French bastard finally comes out of the bathroom or wherever, and spots Daniel asleep in a chair with some soup (or salad). They have a long conversation in Dora-approved Franglish where they say everything twice and it's ridiculous and now I am drunk also. Basically they love each other and Daniel is apologetic about how being his dad also means acting like his dad and occasionally you have to force-feed them *déjeuner* before you let them eat cake.

PLAYA. Everybody cheers at the looped footage of Betty riding into the unsavory ladies (Uno: "Taste the watermelon!") and Daniel decides to daddy-bear them too, but Betty appears and admits that, as usual, her stupid actions are hilarious. But also, she agrees with Daniel that Team Playa is a bunch of idiots: which is why they should (INT: PLAYA OFFICES. BETTY: "Put it on the Playa website and leak it online." I don't know what any of this means but I know the WGAw fucked us on this last year. -- Wells) so that they can appeal to their demographic, which is themselves: 18-39 year old idiots who respond to this kind of humor. Uno has a newfound respect for Betty, Daniel has an oldfound same, everybody cheers her instead of booing. It's all just so formulaic.

Betty comes up the five flights toting a bucket and mop and whatever people use, and hears strange sounds coming from 5G. I am still no closer to figuring out the "cellar door" type linguistic reasons that "rape whistle" is the funniest phrase in the English language, because it really shouldn't be. Anyway, she puts her rape whistle in her mouth and heads inside, and it's Team Suarez scrubbing it up and painting over that lovely green paint.

She's wearing -- because aesthetic and design are essential in living a beautiful life -- a neon skirt in Electrocuted Youth blue and neon tights of Get That Looked At Right Away pink -- and her sister (Whose boobs look fantastic right now! You go, Glen Coco!) is wearing everything Vanessa Abrams ever put on herself, in shades of Get Aubergine Yourself purple and Whatever Happened To Natasha Lyonne rose. Hilda's boobs look really good. Betty randomly tells Hilda that she's her total hero because she managed to overcome whatever it

is and succeed, plus the great dude attached to Eddie Cibrian's ass. Hilda says she's not all blue skies and puppy kisses, but does not yet admit her whoredom.

On the cheapest most insultingly crappy greenscreen of I guess Times Square, Mark and Wili act bizarre about how she ended up getting the billboard after all, and a huge terrifying Wilhelmina stares down at all her minions. Mark says her triple threat scores are "Editor, Diva, and ... Threat." Which better than Bitch, which is what he was about to say. They sing Ripa's praises for playing their evil games of PR obfuscation, which is why that show was created in the first place, and Mark pronounces her "as reliable as she is fertile." I too remember when jokes about Kelly Ripa's billion children were fresh and new. I feel young again.

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They randomly put on sunglasses and, just before going after Moose and Squirrel or whatever the fuck is going on, the two Wilhelminas wink at each other, and Wili knows authentic sexual desire for the first time. Then she makes a weirdo face like that Joni Mitchell analogue from Dr. Teeth & The Electric Mayhem. That scene went haywire at some point.

Betty congratulates herself on meeting her goals, crossing them off, but just as she's considering her new cloistered life of chastity, the powerful and virile sounds of Val Emmich, my Myspace friend, total hottie, and frequent guest star, come rippling through the room and across her skin. She knocks on his door, they meet cute -- which in this case means, he is totally cute and she meets him, whilst stammering and staring like she's having a brain hemorrhage right in front of him -- and we meet cute Jesse, who is a singer-songwriter who has "gigs" and is a singer-songwriter. He gives her back her actual power animal, which is the good old B necklace from before, because she lost it when she lost herself, but herself is good and the necklace "suits" her, blah blah identitycakes. She goes home and immediately starts swooning. Is Betty actually stupid? Probably. She seems to think so.

But her house looks fucking chill now. She sticks her head out into her first NATC night and dances around while Jesse sings "American Girl," which is apparently our new song for self-discovery. This dancing around thing always makes me really uncomfortable because like many things we all do, it's a private activity that other people shouldn't see unless they are paying for it on the internet.

Next week: Wili seduces Betty back to *Mode*, she randomly becomes a total bitch, Daniel gets pissed, the word protégé gets tossed around, I attempt to put the "wee" back in "weecap," and there's what looks to be an epic Mark v. Betty showdown. Awesome. Here's to next week!

'TIL WE HAVE *PRADA*

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 2 | Aired on 10.02.2008

Filing For The Enemy - Betty takes on the Myth of Psyche, but it's Daniel who reaps the benefits.

Betty is none too impressed watching the latest *Player* photo shoot: *Player*-type models dressed as lawyers and a judge shooting sexy jurisprudence and abdominal muscles all over the place. She mentions to Daniel that perhaps this is a diversion from her suggestion that *Player* show women in "a more professional light." I like *Player* as a *Mode* for Daniel's less amazing qualities and I'm bummed that we're ending that period, but I have no idea where this whole Editor-In-Chief shuffle is headed, besides Christina's uterus, so I'm not worried about it.

However, what I am worried about is Betty's brain, because so far she has made two suggestions: cancerous lesbians on motorcycles and successful women lawyers. I mean, if it's your job wouldn't you pick up an issue or two and discern why those are stupid ideas? The beauty of the "natch" thing last year, rewriting Betty's earnestness in pseudo-hip lingo of the young people, was that it wasn't necessary. This is like doing that same story, only Betty is incapable of understanding her magazine or its readership. ...Which thing was her triumph at the end of last week: understanding that men are deeply stupid, and will pay money for the opportunity to look at stupid things plus boobs. "Does it always have to be women in bras?" she asks, as a case-in-point, but like: yeah. Yeah, it does. Daniel tells the models amicably to lose their neon pink bras, and they all throw them in Betty's face. But like, what happens when Betty starts working for *Equestrian Monthly*? Bitching constantly about all the horses on every page?

Really, Daniel just doesn't want Betty to see what he's surreptitiously working on, which is marking up the galley of Wilhelmina's first issue of *Mode*. I love that Daniel is so ADD that his only refuge from doing his new job is doing his old job. Betty screams, vindicated, that she knew he secretly wished he were still at *Mode*, and he says he was just suspicious about what Wili's up to. "You know what she's up to! Firing! Scheming! Kicking puppies!" Daniel swears he's happy to be out of that atmosphere, but that doesn't stop Betty from being ebullient about his backsliding into gayness.

Betty brings the book straight to Alexis and shows her all of Daniel's really good notes, and Alexis is unreceptive on many levels of course, but mostly just says it's because Daniel's critical on account of jealousy. Betty swears that it's because he loves *Mode* and is good at *Mode* and takes *Mode* seriously, and Alexis is finally like, "I can't have this conversation with you without acknowledging my serious compromises and betrayals, so: thanks for your loyalty to us all, but Daniel simply doesn't work at *Mode* anymore." Which is valid. Of course Betty slumps off, and of course Alexis immediately is impressed by Daniel's notes on the book. Wouldn't it be weird if Alexis suddenly switched allegiances back to her family? It's always such a shock when she does that in every other episode.

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Coach Tony and Hilda are eating hotdogs and walking like the cheating scum that they are. "What's more romantic than lunch on foot with a view of Riker's Island?" Hilda jokes, but like: ANYTHING. Tony asks her out on a "real" date, explaining that his wife is going to be

out of town, which of course irritates and insults Hilda. God love her, but the girl's appetite for delusion rivals anyone's. It's her least attractive trait, and sometimes -- ghost of Santos, anyone? -- frankly creepy. Like it's so gross of Tony to mention the fact that the logistical hump that is his wife will be absenting herself from their gross threesome for a second. She makes him promise that they have a real future together, thus rendering said promise null and void, so he gives it, swearing that she's not the "other" woman, she's the "only" woman. And the whole thing, while believable, is so yucky that the only feeling I can muster up is sadness that Cibrian's never going to be a regular because: how on earth do you come back from that? You don't.

Alexis meets with Wili and proceeds to bring up each one of Daniel's notes; reserving particular scorn for the cover image: an unrecognizable and "arty" image of Angelina Jolie in a block of ice. Wilhelmina, amateur graphologist, immediately discerns that the notes in question -- bearing "the rounded o's of a stunted adolescent" and "the stiff t's of someone who's clearly overcompensating" -- are from Daniel. "J'accuse!" shouts Mark, in case you forgot he exists. Alexis admits that they're from Daniel, but presses forward about how Wili's premiere issue needs all the help it can get. Wili laughs at Alexis's mention of the Woman On The Street feature: "We shouldn't be taking pictures of them, we should be throwing rocks at them!" That's probably the best part of the episode. Alexis once again cautions her to check out the notes, but Wili's one step ahead and realizes this is all Betty Suarez's fault. Whether by dim kindness or serious machination, Betty's taken step one for getting Daniel back into *Mode*. She sends Mark to knock a burrito out of Betty's hand and summon her to a lunch meeting.

At lunch, Wili immediately plays the usual minority card in a seriously dorky way, about how they're just "two women of color out for a fancy lunch on the town. Isn't this fun, girlfriend? And that blouse is heaven! Where did you get it? I love it!" Betty sighs and Wili admits that it's "hideous, like driving through Ohio." Wili is on tonight! She asks Betty for help with some bullshitty eponymous filing confusion, and Betty says she'll ask for time off from *Player* to come help her, because Betty rules. Wilhelmina's sights for Betty are set a little higher: return to *Mode* as assistant to the Editor In Chief. Which admittedly is a six-word résumé that would do anything for you. Betty points out that she would never leave Daniel, and that Wilhelmina is an untrustable psychotic, and Wili cheers both her "loyalty" and her "suspicion," saying that Betty would never have to do anything wrong, ugly or morally suspect: "That's what Mark is for!" she says brightly, and tells her to think before throwing away her future at *Player*.

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Back in Queens, the family is no more interested in Betty's drama than normal. Justin swans around in a pink tank mangling sports metaphors; Hilda just wants her to get a *Player* cover signed by sports figures for some Coach Tony-related auction. Betty says she felt like she was cheating just by talking to Wili, and Hilda immediately goes on a whole meltdown about how it's not cheating to explore options, and shuts herself down pretty quick: "I ... just care about you!" I'm tired of cartoon Hilda and I wish real Hilda would come back; she was with her babydaddy for about five seconds and it's time to get a new, healthy hobby. Betty resolves to talk to Daniel immediately, because especially at *Mode*, secrets tend to go bad. Of course, Wili is right this second blowing Daniel's mind with the hints about Betty possibly deserting him.

Daniel freaks out on Betty about how she's stepping out on him, and she's forced to admit that working for *Player* isn't exactly her dream job. Please, it's not even a job she can comprehend! She admits she's not happy, and he swears he is, but her suspicion -- and wonderfully intimate, loving dubiousness about it -- cause him to go insane on her because she's right. She begs him to stop shouting and be reasonable, and he tells her very reasonably that she is a poopoo head and that he's taking his ball and going home and she go play with Wilhelmina for all he cares. Betty heads to Wili's office and asks if the offer's still open, sadly; Wili smiles horrifyingly in response.

Betty and Christina walk somewhere so that Betty can bitch about how Daniel's ambition and fight are gone, and very-compromised Christina tells her that she can't change Daniel, and needs to watch herself. There is a reference to Wili as the Wicked Witch of the East Side, which is passably funny but pretty much a home run for old Christina. She counsels Betty that only Betty knows what she's capable of, and frankly is selfish and honest enough to admit she just likes having a friend at *Mode*. Mark and Wilhelmina watch them embrace, and Mark rejoices about being in charge of Betty. Wili tells him not to be too hard on her because the point isn't to drive her out, just keep her in a holding pattern and away from Daniel's ass and her constant saving of it.

Mark offers Betty a mimosa at Cold New *Mode*, immediately admits this was a lie, and then says if she doesn't fuck up he won't have to beat her with a bag of oranges. He punctuates this whole round of abuse with a constant nose-tapping that would cause yours truly to punch him in the dick. Christina warns Betty not to eat or drink anything he gives her, which is awesome because of the whole Underworld aspect of life without Daniel in Wili's thrall -- how maybe you can check out any time but you can never leave -- but also the whole idea of people at a magazine slipping each other pomegranate mickies, which Mark underlines with more tapping: "You're on Team Slater now! No drugging of you!"

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Daniel has a short meeting with his teenage attorney, who says suddenly DJ's French grandparents are claiming custody. Daniel's all, "But he IS home!" and things of this nature, and she cautions him that custody battles often turn ugly. (Here's a tip: only when the kid's not the point to begin with.) She points out that DJ's thirteen (I thought he was like five, I can never tell) and capable of forming an opinion about these things. Daniel is sad and wanders into a conference room to have some lonely feelings, all of which land squarely on a coffee mug of Betty's which was just sitting around with her face on it so he could find it and have feelings.

Mark coaches Betty about basic shit she already knows, going into a meeting with a crazy makeup lady. He applies some makeup to her face but of course it has no effect on her extreme ugliness. Crazy takes Wilhelmina's coffee out of Betty's hands immediately, causing attitude toward Betty from Wili and more sad faces from Betty. The woman checks out Betty's hideous face and asks if she uses her crazy makeup, and Betty -- because, again, she has become retarded -- says no. Mark jumps in all about how he sure does, and would rather plotz than go a night without her wonderful creams and unguents. Betty says she can't afford the crazy makeup, and the lady mentions they're debuting a budget line. Betty says they should advertise this in *Mode*, and the lady laughs, so then ...

Betty has to sit in a fashion magazine's conference room full of adults and explain the basics of aspiration. In a fashion magazine. To a makeup executive. At the most basic level.

Because nobody has ever thought about the fact that poor people buy magazines about rich people stuff they will never afford. So maybe Betty's okay, I guess, because in the country of the blind, the brace-faced woman is king, but like: how did luxury magazines every spring into existence without your knowledge? Wili's like, "Isn't that fucking interesting because we just found a way to sell your new line." That "new way of selling" is called ADVERTISING. So of the people in the magazine industry that have ever read a magazine, you've got Betty at *Player* wondering why all the boobs, and Wilhelmina shocked that poor people read *Mode*, and crazy makeup lady being shocked by the genius idea of selling makeup in a fashion magazine. Which is why she was there in the first place. No wonder they're all always in trouble.

My favorite thing about this show has always been Betty's awesomeness, which this scene would have you believe it is about. Except, you know, usually it involves Betty actually being awesome instead of Betty saying basic shit everybody knows and then the people are somehow stupid for today only and find it brilliant. Coming out of the meeting, Betty can't believe her luck! Thank God everybody got stupid for five seconds so her obvious idea, which by the way would never actually play because it betrays the entire idea of aspirational branding to begin with, was met with amazed approval. Upside, she slaps Mark on the shoulder with excitement, which shocks him. He tells her Wili was not fucking smiling at her brilliant ass, but in fact just "showing her teeth." Wili summons her to the office, showing an admittedly fucked-up amount of teeth; Betty clutches terrified at Mark's arm and he slaps her away.

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Betty tries to apologize for speaking out of turn, but Wili ignores her and immediately sends her on the Miranda Priestly/*Till We Have Faces* jaunt, up to and including one of Catherine the Great's wedding tiaras in lieu of the new Harry Potter for the twins, since her only baby is growing in a costumer's pickled womb and will be too evil to like anything good. Betty asks a bunch of questions and Wili refuses to answer them, blah blah, sort these seeds and grab some fleece, it took three years for this Devil to Wear Prada, and apparently thirty minutes to resolve it. Which, again, bums me out, because wouldn't you like to see Wilhelmina play vengeful Aphrodite a while longer? She's earned it.

DJ and Daniel play catch in the park and do a lot of *Dora Exploring*, including an awesome conversation about how DJ can't go to a hooker until he's older; Daniel stutters for awhile before bringing up grandmère and grandpère. DJ says he does love them, and would like to visit them, but this isn't definitive enough an answer to the question Daniel still hasn't summoned the nuts to actually ask, plus he's not sure if it wouldn't be easier if DJ left, etc. DJ waits for the grilling to resume, then asks if he's done talking. Daniel takes the out.

Even the music plays homage to *Devil* as Betty complains about Wili paying her back for the "save" with crazy makeup lady with yet more bullshit. Christina says the worst thing she might do is beat Betty with a car antenna, which she's always thought was an urban legend anyway, and then avoids answering the phone because her horrible drug-addicted Stuart is on the line with his stupid cancer. (Love the actor, hate the character, hate the storyline.) She shows Betty his very nasty comb full of hair, and Betty wigs, because it's gross but it doesn't mean he's on drugs, and get that out of her face. Christina says she's sending it to a lab to prove his drug use, and they talk about how Betty can't let Wili down or get fired, because... What purpose does Christina serve? She's nice to look at. I hate this story. I wish she would miscarry or something. Not die,

necessarily, but just become something more interesting than some poor man's Fairy Godmother with evil spawn inside her. Doesn't it feel like she's been pregnant since you were a little kid?

Betty heads to the museum and stares at the ugly crown and gets shit on three times, fairytale/myth style, as far as the possibility of her renting it for the night of Wili's debut issue party. Some lady starts crying randomly, but she's the third one, so you have to be nice to her. Lovely Amanda and Mark discuss how lucky he is to have "such feminine fingers," perfect for injecting Wili's Botox, and when Betty shows up from her short mythic journey, Mark calls her "Betty the Mediocre." They laugh about all the hoops she had to jump through, and then she produces the tiara -- the third guardian just got dumped because she gained weight, and needed a friendly, ugly shoulder to cry on. "You got it by being nice to someone?" asks Mark, because the only fairytale he knows is... Too easy.

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Betty says they have to give the museum a full page next month, and the two bodyguards of the tiara have to remain within twenty feet the whole time Wili's got it. Wilhelmina, impressed, bestows on Betty the honor of injecting a needle of botulism into her face. Lucky! At the chaise, Betty wonders aloud what we've all been asking, which is: wouldn't a better person for this duty be a doctor? "Or at least a nurse practitioner?" I don't know why, but that cracked me up. Wili admits, hilariously and graphically, that her face is so numb she wouldn't know it if Betty "hit bone." Hello to the imagery. Right before she sticks it in, Wili stops her and says this is all proof that Betty is the power behind Daniel Meade, aka Cupid, and that's why she wanted her. So the tiara thing was a test? "Because I thought that was a punishment for speaking up in your meeting." No, in fact, Wili was impressed and thought Betty was The One. "Like *Lord Of The Rings*?" Betty asks. Oh, Betty. Henry's dorky ass is on the other side of the country.

Wili explains that the only previous person to actually accomplish retrieval of the crown was herself, when she was Fey's assistant. Of course, she sucked cock for it instead of giving hugs, but the important thing was that she accomplished the impossible. "I am going to groom you. And Lord knows you need some grooming." Wili pronounces Betty her protégé, and says she'll be replacing Mark as lead for the launch party. "After this, you can write your own ticket. Who knows? Maybe you'll be the next Wilhelmina Slater." Betty is, to say the least, less than excited about that.

Mark's doing deep breathing exercises when Betty approaches him, and his face is pure evil as he swears he would rather "eat butter" than willingly aid her in any way. Betty protests that she hasn't even asked him to do anything, but he says even the idea of her ordering him around is against nature. She starts to tell him he's being ridiculous, and he throws a hand in her face: "SORCERESS!" Whining that she's taken "everything that matters," he shrinks back horrified when she touches his arm sympathetically. "I have less than twenty-seven hours for this launch, and there's no way I do this without you." She asks him to help her find a "lifesized, anatomically correct black vodka ice sculpture" and he immediately runs off to Amanda to bitch. "...Waddles back in here like a helpless brown Weeble, and while I'm not looking plunging my world into darkness!" Amanda gathers him to her bosom and sings a little song: "Hush little homo, don't you cry, Mandy's gonna steal you a Prada tie..." He nestles in her arms and tells her not to touch his hair, petulantly: "It's how I like it."

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Tony shows up, throwing them both into a total tizz with his hotness, and both Mark and Amanda crawl all over each other claiming to be Betty Suarez. He's confused and impatient, and asks them to just page her and stop being total weirdos. Neither of those things are ever going to happen. He's very adorable and nice even as they crawl all over him and touch his muscles and are totally scary; Betty finally comes out with the signed *Player* issue. Mark pretends to be totally fascinated and, game, Tony asks if he saw that particular Superbowl. "If I say yes, will you take your shirt off?" Cliff shows up and he and Tony have a cute-off. Cliff wins by the precise amount of: infinity.

Betty gasps when she turns around to find Amanda pretty much sharing her space, and Amanda says she needs the info on Coach Tony ... Whose phone she totally pickpocketed! Awesome. "I was in a trance, I barely remember what happened!" She admits to having her "tingle" "dulled" by the pictures of Tony kissing some slutty stewardess. Betty's awesome: "My sister is not a stewardess," she automatically says, letting the "slutty" part slide, until she sees the slut in question, and it's not Hilda after all.

Betty immediately calls Hilda to her apartment for dinner, and has the obligatory phone call about the debut party that's just long enough for Hilda to bitch about being ignored. "I heard Tony was sexually harassed by your coworkers," she laughs, and Betty admits that it happens a lot at *Mode*. Hell, it's gotta happen to Tony five or six times a day either way. Betty reluctantly hands over the phone, calling attention to the stewardess pictures in her sad way. To Hilda's credit, she comes clean about Tony's wife immediately, feeling gross about it. Betty does not react well, but still reacts more kindly and sympathetically than Hilda would if their positions were reversed, which they never would be. Hilda admits she feels gross about it, but can't leave him, because she's in love with him. Also, he is Eddie Cibrian. Listen, if somebody could get shot in the face over Joey Buttafuoco?

First day of school, and Daniel's all full of advice, from the commonplace ("listen to your teacher") to the Meade specific (Ethical Slut rules), as though they'll never see each other again. He really sells the whole anxious-dad thing, to the point where DJ defuses him by remarking that his French is, *quest ce que c'est*, "sucky." Claire watches Daniel fuss and be all in love, and tells him he's a natural father. Daniel worries that he's being selfish, wanting to keep the kid, and Claire reminds him that loving the grandparents doesn't mean he won't want to stay in America, but that she's not going to tell Daniel what to do. Daniel admits that his problem -- and it's the same problem as always, so props to him for noticing -- is that he's afraid to ask the question because of the answer he might get. Claire just picks at his lint and smiles.

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Betty sends somebody down to an Italian restaurant in the building, yelling that she doesn't care if the girl has to buy every pizza in the place, they need somewhere to store it until the party. She lectures Amanda and Mark to "stop poofing around," because Wili is going to freak out, and they suck helium, chipmunking at her about how "Why don't you fucking tell me how Wilhelmina gets," and it's hilarious. New duty for Betty, on top of everything: to shred about a hundred pounds of old mail into confetti. Mark looks, by the way, totally beautiful in his monochromatic outfit and long silk scarf, as does Amanda. I like the *NewMode* style if only because everybody looks so good in the cold. He notes that loyalty is neither Wili's thing nor is it Betty's, and in fact he's noting all kinds of similarities: "Is that why you dumped Daniel the second he got in the way of your career? That's exactly what Wilhelmina would have done."

Betty steps out of the elevator on her way to do whatever, and starts hallucinating. As we often do at work. The quotes comparing Betty and Wili from everybody in all the scenes so far kind of overlap crazily and she suddenly imagines herself as a total Slater 2.0, down to the gown and necklace and hair. It's freaky. She demands "carrot shavings" because she's "feeling snacky," and then yells at some randoms, "Look at me when I'm Yelling at you! ...Don't look at me!" She tells a guy with jacked-up teeth to get his teeth fixed, some other girl to stop eating a donut, and a third to lose ten pounds. Then she fires all of them. Daniel comes in looking homeless and trying to remind her of how much they love each other, and she has him taken out by security. Then she kicks a puppy, then wakes up screaming ("Not the puppy!") at her desk. That ... could have been easily fifty times better. Whatever. She picks up some mail to shred it, and freaks out because they're all addressed to Daniel and contain something surprising.

Justin's wearing a different tank and super skinny jeans, and takes issue with Hilda's date outfit, which contains both leopard and zebra print. After all, he says, "They fight each other in the wild!" Ignacio tells her she deserves a nice date with a nice hot guy, and she attempts to hope good things for herself while still feeling super gross. I've always found the best way to clear your conscience is to not do awful nasty things, like, you tell the guy to leave his wife or else, and then they leave their wife or they don't, but either way you're not part of something gross and it's not your problem -- and most importantly, you're not being *a total cliché*, which honestly is probably most of why I'm icked out by this: how old do you have to be before you realize that things are clichés because people are stupid, and you are stupid for doing the clichéd thing, and you can't laugh your way out of that? If you don't want to be "that girl," stop doing the thing that makes you that girl, because you automatically are. No matter how special you think you are or how you've argued your way out of it inside your own head, if you do the clichéd thing you *are the cliché*, and you need to get real. Sometimes it really is that simple.

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Betty tosses a big bag of fan mail onto Daniel's desk and tells him he's wasting both time and talent at *Player. Mode* is the flagship of his family's company, and he was good at it. In fact, there is tons of mail supporting that very concept: the bags are full of fan mail and letters to the editor about how great Daniel's *Modewas*. Apparently Wili was having them hidden, including positive letters about Daniel's June cover ("a pimple on the butt of fashion," Wili apparently called it, even though she would never say anything like that and nobody actually would say that) and the whole Normal Woman segment that Normal Women love so much when they're not getting rocks thrown at them for being Normal.

Betty tells him to show Alexis the letters, and Daniel says she doesn't even care about him. Betty can't deny that, but they both know she cares about *Mode*. Daniel finally breaks down and explains his behavior: he really appreciates Betty's nagging, and of course he yearns to be back at *Mode*, which is why he screamed at her, because she reminds him of how great it was at *Mode* every day she's around. But at the end of the day Wili won, and he lost, and it's over. "Anything you truly want has to be worth fighting for," Betty platitudes with tears in her eyes, and he hopefully starts reading those damn letters in order to turn his excitement back on. That's what I would do.

Christina yells at Stuart about the lab results, which included oxy and heroin; she compares him to the "spawn" of Rush Limbaugh and Amy Winehouse, had they ever "fornicated." That's so weird it's not even gross to think about. Stuart, of course, is incensed that she

tested him for drugs, and she threatens to call INS, and he doesn't believe her, but she tells him she will, and he pushes over a mannequin and leaves all scary.

Man, I'm glad that mannequin isn't carrying a stupid frozen-sperm baby of evil. A fall like that could really complicate things.

DJ plays one of those rockin' music video games the kids are into these days while Daniel reads his fan mail, and finally Daniel has read enough positive letters that he gets just enough self-esteem back to pop the question to DJ about staying in America. DJ thinks about it for like two seconds and says of course he would rather stay in America, where there are vastly fewer French people than in France itself. Daniel picks up a *Guitar Hero* guitar, having settled it.

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The reasons that *The Devil Wears Prada* is awesome are many: Anne Hathaway is good for looking at, and both leads are great actors, and the "cerulean blue" speech is the most concise explanation of the connection between commerce and art I've ever heard. But the reason, I think, that it will live forever is that it tells a very awesome, very old and necessary story, and it does it very well. Psyche falls in love with Eros in a classic Beauty & The Beast story where she can't look at his face because he's a God and that's way heavy. Aphrodite steps in to say that she can't be with him until she does these tasks, and each of these tasks -- although very feminine in connotation -- forces Psyche across the line from emotion to logic: separating seeds, cleaning up messes, stealing golden wool, going to the underworld for Persephone's cold cream, etc. The story's undervalued because women's experience is undervalued, and you need look no further than this show's success -- which will always be partial at best precisely because of the high feminine/gay/fashion/camp/soap element present -- to know that this is still an issue.

But the story itself is essential, and informs a lot of later fairytales (particularly Andersen, who really just wrote a billion riffs on this story and created the best fairytales ever as a result). Really what it's about is the duty of young women to make contact with their internal masculine pieces, so that they can look at their beloved head-on, and see him as another person instead of a projection of her own stuff. Men are just people, not misplaced pieces of ourselves, because we don't misplace pieces of ourselves anywhere further than our own backyard. Miranda teaches Andy to be hard, logical and smart, which is to say she gives her options: go back to the creative writer you were meant to be, or take Miranda's path. And that's present here, at least in gesture, but only if you look at Betty and Daniel as two halves of the same person: she teaches him to see his own masculine face in the mirror of *Mode*, and accept that for good or ill he's good at editing women's fashion. But she couldn't accomplish any of this without the help of Mark's usual secret and undervalued wizardry, and Wilhelmina's Aphrodite machinations, which is how all myths and fairytales work: not the tools you already know you have, but the adverse circumstances and surprise potentials all around and within you. So there's that.

Anyway, it's a weecap. The party is, of course, so totally scary. You've got ice sculptures of people, and models dressed as angels, and the music is quietly going "uh!" in the background like a porno on a loop or a video of an old lady falling down. Betty notes that Wili isn't wearing Tiara the Great, and Wili's like, "I'm EIC of a fashion magazine?" Betty is unsurprised and hands over her two week's notice, because she apparently needed a whole episode to notice that Wilhelmina Slater is a bitch. Wili mourns the loss of what would never

have actually been, complaining that "under those gaping pores and caveman eyebrows," she thought she detected an intelligence in Betty. Like that genius idea to sell products in the pages of a magazine? That was fucking amazing.

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"You think life is all about who's right and who's wrong, but history is written by those who win, not by those who were the nicest." True, and I've always loved best about *Prada* the fact that Miranda had a point, and presented both paths as viable options: you swim with sharks, or you don't. But here, Wili's just ... wrong, and there's no room for the subtleties of those choices, because the world of the show -- which I love -- is all day-glo candyfloss, and wildly extreme, and you can't say that Wilhelmina's life has value, because it doesn't. She's a supervillain. It's like Cruella De Vil telling you you're being naïve: what else is she going to say? Anyway, Betty makes a classy and wonderful Betty-type exit ("Enjoy your party") but runs into Claire, who tells her to stay put, because it's about to get awesome. And at the door? Alexis and Daniel. Awesome!

Tired of standing around outside the restaurant, Hilda finally calls Tony, who answers in "I am with my wife who is standing right here" code, but it takes forever for her to figure it out, and even longer to remember that she's totally being played for a fool.

Daniel and Alexis whirl around and around Wilhelmina like scary snakes, taking potshots at her editrix style, calling it "cold" and pointing out that -- even if her "specific vision" wasn't something Alexis was going to grasp -- it was too subtle for everybody else too. Her relaunch issue is one of the lowest sellers in months, and she's getting bumped back down to Creative Director so that Daniel can come back in as EIC. Claire, Alexis and Daniel get right the fuck up in her face and it is amazing. Betty whispers to Mark that she knows he set up everything, the letters and whatnot, to get back with Wili, and he says he would never do anything against Wilhelmina's interests ... Unless they were going against his own. They both grin kind of affectionately away from each other and take sips of champagne; Betty's is white, and his is black. She's impressed with his style.

It's not Wili that owns a third of the business, but her spooky baby. Claire goes a little Clairiffic and knocks over an ice sculpture, daring Wili to threaten her children ever again: "You have no idea of the lengths I'll go to protect them."

Man, I'm glad that ice sculpture wasn't carrying a demon heir to the Meade fortune!

Daniel grabs Betty and thanks her for her faith in him; she plays it off of course because that's what friends are for. Of course, he needs to know she's coming back to him yet again, and she needles him about the raise Wili gave her. It's more like, "Look how cute" than actually cute, but then there's nothing more comforting than status quo, which is right back where we're at.

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Christina waddles around in a crazy kimono with pumping music that tells you something is about to happen, and then things go slo-mo so you know something's going to happen, then the elevator won't come so she goes into the stairwell. Then a known drug-user with a criminal history of violence and mannequin- or statue- pushing shoves her down the stairs,

and she lays there all crumpled and shocking. Man, I hope that drunken Scottish girl without a storyline wasn't carrying the... oh, crap.

FASHION ROADKILL!

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 3 | Aired on 10.09.2008

Crimes of Fashion - Daniel Junior's paternity! Wilhelmina's maternity! Hilda and Alexis's respective surprising acts of sorority! No wonder Daniel's office is still the Nursery of the Damned. Oh, and Christina's fine. Isn't that great?

Why didn't anybody push the French kid down the stairs? I'll do it. Anyway, it's tomorrow, the day after the big bash, a bunch of mannequins and ice sculptures got slapped and smashed and roughed up, and the cops are interrogating Betty about where Daniel spent the evening after things got horrible(r) at the *NewMode* shindig. Betty *Rashomons* to six hours ago, when she was rushing around while Ignacio pretended they were having breakfast by bugging her on the phone. She is wearing a fit-inducing blue print granny dress in polyester with a big stupid neckerchief and a weird Kmart shirt-thing over it with a psychedelic print in red and white that looks like a headache feels.

Out in the hallway, she discovers her umbrella is gone, even though as she protests she is totally street-savvy from growing up in Queens and not naïve or gullible or overly trusting. Ignacio calls her dumb for leaving her umbrella in the stand outside her door, just like when she let some guys "borrow" her bike in the seventh grade. She protests that those guys totally said they'd bring it back, and puts a Betty shine on it, hoping she won't need it anyway.

Of course, it's raining. Amanda congratulates her on her improved look as she enters the *Mode* offices, and she ignores her, wishing "Daniels" a good morning. DJ says something irritating and French, pronounces himself "Audi Five K," and wanders away to annoy elsewhere. Betty is perky to an annoying degree, handing Daniel his schedule for his first day back, reminding him that almost all his mail is being forwarded to Alexis, and offering to take his shit to the dry cleaner since he's finally stopped wearing tracksuits. He tosses a dusty raincoat in her face and asks her, since he wasn't available to take Claire home last night, to tell anybody that asks that they were packing up the *Player* offices late into the night. Betty wonders if the simplest explanation wouldn't be to just tell the truth, and he stutters for awhile.

Marc hops up on Amanda's desk looking fly in a popped-collar polo and red neckerchief to announce that Wilhelmina is in the hospital. When everyone gasps, he clarifies that she's visiting her surrogate, at which point Betty -- basically alone -- gasps again. "Don't worry, the baby and Wilhelmina are fine," he assures them, and Betty asks about Christina. "You know... I didn't ask."

Bouquet-bearing Betty goes to visit Christina in the hospital, where she's lying with a bandage around her head and acting like she has a concussion even more fiercely than normal, because this time the concussion is all too real. She whispers that she was pushed down the stairs, and then we hop to *Fashion Buzz*, where Lloyd tells us all about the Baby Mama Drama, including a cute animated stick-figure of Christina bopping down the stairs. As though she'd ever been that thin, drinking the way she does. "Or was she pushed?!" he cries, over a hilarious pop-up video representation of the suspects. It starts with the Meades, of course -- "The Playboy," "The Tranny," and an angry jailhouse rockstar picture of Claire -- and quickly overwhelms the screen with pictures of every one of Wili's "frenemies" from, like, every episode: Gina Gershon's more-insane-even-than-reality

lips, designers, that little gay guy that's everywhere, that rock musician with Amanda's tongue, the baseball player, Martha Stewart, [Christian and my personal hero Nina Garcia](#), Betty White, Posh... Even the wife of Diego María de la Concepción Juan Nepomuceno Estanislao de la Rivera y Barrientos Acosta y Rodríguez is up in this bitch. Wili always did hate South American Communists most of all.

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Wili gives a whole press conference about finding the person who threatened her unborn child -- whisper from Marc -- "...And others..." She offers a hundred K for info and squeezes out part of a tear.

Jump immediately to Wili, taking advantage, -- as any Big Business opportunist would -- of the Schiavo-rific opportunity that just fell in her lap, via stairwell. The more they talk about her creepy frozen-sperm zombie baby, the less they'll talk about the Angelina-in-a-block-of-ice failure that was Wili's inaugural (and only) issue. Besides, she explains, if somebody gives you chintz, you have two options: bitch about how it's actually upholstery fabric, brew up some nice cold chintzade, or make a fabulous bolero jacket. Okay, one of those was mine, but I'm not, as Marc puts, it a "diabolical fashion genius," as he reminds her that her baby -- "And others!" -- are in the hospital. Wili agrees: they have to stage many long nights at the hospital, fretting and worrying uselessly, so that nobody forgets the real victim here. Who is? Marc doesn't know, even as he's asking, but I bet you do: "Me."

The second the cops -- who BTW are not even that cute but then, like somewhere between Henry and Marc and Cliff and Coach Tony and Daniel Sr., they broke the Cute-Meter© on this show forever ago so who knows what "moderately cute" means, plus they're all authoritative -- enter, Amanda crawls over the desk toward them like Cristal Connors after some Doggy Chow, confessing to anything and everything. "You have to interrogate me for like hours and hours. And I do not break easy." She breaks character -- or whatever Black Snake Moan character she's attempting at this moment -- and confides, "I am totally easy." I feel like I still haven't gotten that quintessential Amanda scene this year, although this episode has a few contenders; because the cops don't know about how broken her Loony-Meter© can get, they think they're scared just from this. They don't know from scared -- she's at like a 3. Betty saves them from Amanda, who screams "BUT I'M GUILTY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?" and then, brilliantly, hangs out on the desk long after they're gone, kicking her feet and being nuts on her own time. Meanwhile, Betty goes from usher to ushee as the cops take her in for questioning, closing the loop from the opening scene.

Now: Same thing. She equivocates for a bit about whether she knows where Daniel was, and then ... Tells the cops that he told her to lie about his whereabouts. The end. Without any stuttering or anything, just opens her stupid mouth and says it. I mean, really? I know it fits with the whole "Betty's faith in people: retarded or justified?" theme, but it seems like really lazy fucking writing to do it this way. Like for this scene she's just going to be stupid as shit, and then go back to being Betty in a sec. Kinda like last week, and the week before. Huh. The cops are like, "He told you to lie." She says, essentially, yes. And her ass is so *shocked* that the cops find this interesting that it's suddenly a whole new scene, and she's bitching at Ignacio about how the cops have some nerve thinking that Daniel is covering his tracks when all Betty did was *tell them that*. Bored of Betty's senseless and unending prattling, Justin points out that [Mariska Hargitay](#) is rocking some serious pantsuits of late. Thank you! I couldn't have segued from total retardedness any better than that, girlfriend.

Ignacio points out that if Daniel is innocent, which he obviously is, then Betty's being a moron, which she obviously is, and all three of them cosign, so of course the worry falls right off her shoulders and onto their linoleum, joining the ground-in dirt and grime of all the worries of before. Hilda comes in, covered in the ground-in dirt and grime of SIN, and Betty tosses some judgments her way, even though she totally shackled up with a baby daddy for like a hundred thousand silly-ass years. In which he took off his shirt approximately 2.4 times.

Hilda swears she's the same person, only now with extra whore, and plus how dare Betty judge her, because -- unlike every other married dude in the history of the universe -- Coach Tony's situation is "complicated," and anyway, can Hilda and Tony borrow Betty's apartment in the city? The better to ... have a conversation they shouldn't even be having? I'm sorry, but the conversation is just as obvious and short as it was all summer: "Still married? Then no." It's not that fucking hard to get a divorce. If he doesn't, guess what? He's just not that into you. Case closed. Stop hanging your self-worth on an emotional adolescent and get a real boyfriend, loser. Betty, who is back to being stupid, gives in, all, "Okay, you can use my apartment as a fuck nest ... Just as long as he's not cheating on his wife!"

Amanda begs the cops to handcuff her, worrying Betty on several levels, and she sprint-waddles around to Daniel's office to warn him about how she totally sold him out for no reason whatsoever. Daniel wigs out a tiny bit about why she would do that, because the answer -- no narrative or reason consistent with Betty Suarez the fictional character -- is still a mystery, and then the cops bust in and arrest him for owning horrible gold lame (and lamé) tennis shoes. To be fair, they are not the Fashion Police, but real live cops who have noted that the hand-molded one-of-a-kind soles of his hideous designer crap match the footprints in the dust around the recently discovered prone body of Christina and her womb.

Alexis and Claire spring Daniel, and Claire tells some alcoholic Sedaris story about how she explained to DJ that all Meades go to jail: first grandma, then Daniel. "Aunt Alexis may go to jail next!" Drunks never lie. Alexis offers the suggestion that Wili framed him, and everybody thinks about it; they shove Daniel in a limo with Betty and give a firm "no comment" to the press. I would not want to be in that limo. "You wanna act like your brain just got knocked around your skull like a hockey puck? I'll give you something to act like your brains just got knocked around about."

Christina wakes up to the horrible nightmare of Wili's scary Botox face pretending to act caring and sweet; the flashbulbs a second later from outside help her put it together, and she pronounces Wili's fake concern and photo op "horrible." Wili's disingenuous about it: "Because I care about the welfare of my unborn child?" Hearing it come out of her mouth, she's pleased enough to yell it at the paparazzi: "*Because I care about the welfare of my unborn child!*" Christina, who is I guess still putting it together, bitches that Wili is using her and the spawn as PR props, and Wilhelmina blows her off, calling it hormonal hysteria and saying she just needs some water. Which is kinda funny, but not as funny as Wilhelmina Slater doing a full-bore *Terms Of Endearment* through the hospital, shaking nurses and aliens and getting reincarnated and what have you, screaming, "Someone just give her

some water!" at anyone and everyone, and then, once they've calmed down from that insane display... *Immediately* chilling out even though everybody's still standing there, turning 180 degrees toward the cameras, and vamping around all fierce. She is a one of a kind kind of woman.

Aw, Daniel. No product in jail! He looks like a little chickadee just freed from its shell, his hair is so puffy and funny and sweet. The look on his face? Less so. Betty tries to justify how her brain randomly shit the bed and she sold him out, and Daniel's like, "It's okay, I understand that sometimes resourceful and intelligent young women act retarded to further the plot. But yet I cannot tell you where I really was, and the less I tell you, the better."

Chez Betty, Hilda and Coach Tony have some meaningless conversation about their imminent conversation, but then instead of having the conversation Hilda tells Coach Tony to take a shower in Betty's living room while she makes an ice cream run.

I'm going to say that again.

Instead of talking about Tony leaving his wife, or Hilda leaving Tony, Hilda randomly suggests that Tony take a shower in Betty's living room while she goes to buy ice cream. No setup, no reason, Tony's like, "I feel like a shower!" and Hilda says, "Take a shower here in my sister's living room, and I'll leave you unattended long enough for the viewers to check out your insane bod, and my dad to figure out that you're married." Tony's like, and then we'll fuck, right? And she's like, "It says right here on the script that for some reason I leave you in this strange apartment to take a shower in the living room, so that's what I'm going to do." And I'll tell you right now that there are aspects of this which I am above complaining about.

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...And there they are! The aspects. So Tony takes a shower for a while, getting all cleaned up and smelling nice for their "talk," but Ignacio randomly comes in to replace Betty's locks vis-à-vis their conversation about how gullible she is, and then loiters around staring at the awesome aspects of wet naked Tony until his slut daughter walks in, at which point Tony's wedding ring jumps into the air and lands at Ignacio's feet. Sometimes this show tries so hard, and then other times it does not try at all. Ignacio stomps his tiny feet and runs away, Hilda continues to be in total denial, and Coach Tony is like, "Hey, I'm fine. I'm risking nothing I wouldn't rather see destroyed, and have no emotional capital in this relationship. Worst thing that happens is that I leave her for you, and you spend the next thirty years wondering when I'm going to do the same thing to you, which I eventually will, but none of that is my problem any more than my marriage is my problem. I move that I should only take showers from now on, all the time." Motion carried.

Betty -- actually giving Christina water, note -- whines that Daniel didn't push Christina, and harangues her about whether there's anything she forgot, or didn't fully explain. I normally like the whole "Betty covers for Daniel" angle, but it seems really out of place in this episode. It's just not something Daniel would do. It's something Wilhelmina, Claire, or Alexis would do, because they are cartoons, but it's not something Daniel would do any more than it's something Christina would do. Good thing Betty's stupid this week, or the episode would be about ten minutes long.

Christina explains that she has been avoiding telling Betty -- and the po-po -- about her fight with Stuart where he -- like everybody else on the show, between this week and last -- abused a mannequin after she threatened to have him deported for using her money on drugs. And then, apparently, didn't follow through. Or is planning on doing so after she leaves the hospital. A little awkward light bulb goes off over Betty's head just as a high heel with socks is aiming for her mouth, all, "OMG! We all assumed it was somebody that hated Wilhelmina that pushed you, because you're merely a walking womb, but: nobody's even talking about all the people that fucking hate you!" I admit it. I pushed Christina McKinney down the stairs.

Christina burrs and *ochs* and whatever about how she threatened a violent drug addict with deportation and how unbelievable that he would retaliate in such a characteristic fashion. Or something along those lines. I can't really understand when she speaks. It's because of that stupid accent of hers, probably. So Betty's like, you have to tell the police about how you threatened each other and then he pushed you down the stairs and what about the puir bairn or whatever, Nessie or something, Toad in the Hole, and then of course Stuart is in the hallway coming toward her room. In a kilt. With some bagpipes.

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I love those Brooke Shields commercials about the people having babies to get VWs. I thought about pretending to be really offended by it but that's too dumb to pull off, I think. Betty jumps out from around the corner and screams, "HI!" Kids, if you're ever being approached by a dangerous drug addict who may have attacked your best friend and may be in turn coming back to finish the job, you should try to startle him as badly as possible. They love it, because it keeps their heart rate up. Stuart tries to get around Betty, which even in a hospital hallway is difficult, but she's not having it. She asks what size shoe he wears, and he says 14 (Daniel, who is about four feet taller than Stuart, wears 11) and that the kids at school called him Bigfoot, and it was humiliating.

(Oh, Derek Riddell. You deserve so much better than Stuart. You were so fucking amazing in *Much Ado*, and you were my favorite in *The Book Group*, besides *Fist*. You made me look at hooligans in a whole new way. Also having sex with Spanish soccer players and tiny Scottish soccer fans, you really made me think about those things too. *Vale!*) Anyway yes, he's on drugs, which is why he looks gross and not totally hot like usual, but the reason for that is that his experimental treatment was a bust, so now he has to take a bunch of drugs to dull the pain just like the rest of us.

Oh, plus he's totally going to die. Bummer. (Not actually a bummer.) Betty wastes no time in lecturing Stuart about how his moral imperative at this point is to walk in there to the woman convalescing and tell her that selling her entire dream, her ethics and her self-respect for cold, hard Wili dollars has resulted in a dying junkie without hope of recovery. Just like what was obviously going to happen. Futility, thy name is Scottish stereotypes. Sick Boy (!) heads in to break this gloomy news to Christina, I guess in the hopes that it will finish her off for good and then he can steal her meds or smoke her corpse or something.

Hilda sneaks into the house for some reason, but as adept as she's gotten at sneaking around, Ignacio is better at standing in the corner and waiting to ambush her. Which he does. He ambushes right up her ass. Hilda makes the excellent point that their entire family is based on adultery, which means that at least part of my memory of that is true, although

she doesn't mention him going all Long Island Lolita on the guy, which may be the part I made up. Ignacio says that that is totally different, because in a feudal society like 1970's Mexico, where you're constantly fending off dinosaurs and talking hantaviruses and Tribbles, marriage means something different I guess. Plus, you know, it resulted in such shining examples as his daughters, who are both acting like buttheads this week. She calls this out as chauvinist Latino machismo bullshit, and he resorts to telling her that they are not discussing what a gross (possibly murderous) whore he was many years ago, and should get back to yelling at Hilda for being unable to pass up the totally sweet ass of Eddie Cibrian.

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Then it all turns into *español* and that turns into a *telenovela* which turns into another *novela* which is on the screen that a Meade security guy is watching. One of the weirder transitions of late. Betty asks him for the security tapes, and when he realizes she works for Daniel the murderer, she delivers a hilarious Betty a-ha: "Alleged murderer; and he didn't do it; and you work for him too." It's in the delivery: very funny, staccato like she's planned it out but also spontaneous and triumphant. That's my girl. Anyway, the tape's been stolen, and just like he told the cops and "that little blonde girl," he has no idea where it went.

Straight to Amanda, of course, who wants the reward money for her insane debt and fifteen maxed-out credit cards and parental estrangement. Her real parents, not what's-his-face. She should really get on making that up to them. Betty asks her to give her version of events, and they are -- of course -- totally fucking awesome.

It was late, which is when Amanda usually tries to call the credit card companies, because their overseas customer service people are so much nicer. In the memory, she looks ten times hotter than she even already looks, explaining to "Rahul" that it is no crime to purchase things you can't afford. Amanda, you are so subprime, but I love you. Betty walks into the memory with a giant Dagwood sandwich going, "Amanda, have you seen the mustard? I need it for my big fat sandwich! Which I'm always, like, eating around you, and making a total mess of myself." Amanda nods sagely: "I know! You always are, right?"

Real Betty informs Amanda that she is not constantly eating sandwiches, and was not there during this moment in her life, but Amanda's not hurting: "It really does feel that way sometimes," she says philosophically about Betty's constant eating of big fat sandwiches and mess-making. And in a way, she's right. At least this week. And last week. And last season. And OMG, as usual Amanda is like a wizard. Back to Rahul, to whom she explains that if she pays her bill, she can't pay her rent, and if she can't pay her rent, he'll have nowhere to send the bill, so really she's just thinking of him. Ah Rahul. You lucky man, talking to Amanda across the ocean.

Amanda hears a scream and goes to investigate. "I peered around the corner. It wasn't a woman. ...Well, it was Marc." Marc's hair looks totally debonair as he screams at a woman in Wilhelmina's chair: "You will *rue the day*, Wilhelmina Slater, that you decided to cross Marc St. James! I know all of your plans and I will *make you pay*." He totally slaps the woman in the chair, making Amanda gasp, but also making me think: literally at this point in the evening, half the people on this show were slapping mannequins and threatening the baby. Like half of the entire cast. I cannot let that go. Plus, Marc is lots of times very attractive in the way that Herman Miller or Heywood-Wakefield or Eames is attractive, but when he's hot? So

weird. And yet so hot. Jump to Marc at his desk, admitting that he did shove Christina that night, but -- at their gasps -- it's not what they think.

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Except it's what they think because you said it in a fucked up way that made them think that, which I hate because it only exists to set up the next joke, where he climbs down Betty's throat and complains that someone with her skin tone should be more sensitive to prejudice... Except it's dumb, no matter how funny he is saying it, because: what prejudice? What, you got profiled as somebody who admits to a crime and then acts offended that people think you committed it? How unfair. I'm prejudiced against people who mangle basic English in order to set up jokes that don't even make sense, just like Betty Suarez. And don't be mad, because I'll tell you right now the end of this episode is awesome and justifies any amount of shitty writing and lazy, uncommitted acting, which the rest of the episode is chock full of. Well, not justifies exactly because there's never any reason to shoot for anything other than excellence in all your endeavors, but the disinterested writing and acting are a lot easier to overlook when you know what's coming is so great.

Anyway, Amanda and Marc make crazy faces for awhile -- I mean *crazy* -- while Betty explains why that joke, from setup to follow-through, was useless, and Marc's like, "Okay, I have a secret. I'm not hiding it, I just don't want anyone to know about it." See above regarding how this joke also makes no sense. Betty sighs, all aggrieved as though she wasn't twice this retarded and with the same syntax about ten minutes ago, "Marc, that's the same thing." He takes them to see his Wilhelmina Real Doll. It's ...Not to be insensitive, but Vanessa's face went plastic crazy at some point I don't remember, and in this episode I would say she's easily as lifelike as Marc's doll of her.

Sometimes when Marc's angry, he yells at the doll at night. Flashback to a second ago, where he slaps the doll and it goes spinning around. Amanda points out that this is not only hot but "hardcore," and Marc admits that he later apologized to the doll, like, "I know she's not real, but she's still scary." Betty asks why he was so mad, and he reiterates about his years of loyalty and suddenly Wili hires "this little Mayan fireplug" and promotes her above him. Which was a scheme he was in on, and eventually brought down, last week, some time between slapping mannequins and being totally adorable. He gets on his high horse about how he licks Wili's boots not only because he likes it a little bit -- "they're fancy" -- but because he too has dreams and wants to succeed in the magazine world. Urie always sells these random moments where Marc rises from his nihilistic lunacy and suddenly gives a fuck so well. Anyway, he got all worked up working the faux Wili over, and don't we all know how that goes, so when Christina got between him and the elevator, he shoved her pregnant ass right out the way. And the last thing he saw? Claire Meade, lunging drunkenly at Christina's throat.

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Betty wigs because Claire had both motive and opportunity, is jail-hardened and menopausal, and Amanda points out: "Not to mention she totally murdered my mom. Kind of." You were right the first time. And then to put the icing on this delicious scene, we act out on all three of them, suddenly staring up at the Wilhelmina doll for no reason.

Claire -- wearing nude lipstick and looking like she was just in a hurricane -- explains to the three of them that she would never let her kids take the fall for something she did, because

the two things they tell you in prison are "do your own time" and "don't trust the po-po." She nods at Amanda and Marc, and thinks back to last night. She and Wili were "exchanging [their] usual pleasantries," which was, if you recall, a redux of that classic "Don't you threaten my family, *trick*" / "My *baby* is your family, *ho*" thing they do. My favorite thing is when people take off their earrings as a declaration of ass-whopping, and I've been getting that need met on the regular the last week. I really wanna see Claire take those bitches off and scare the crap out of Wilhelmina sometime soon.

Claire admits that she had a drink to dull the pain (like we all have to do every night alone, am I right ladies?), which Betty admits was a bad call due to Claire's total alcoholism, but not murderous. Claire explains that -- as Amanda nods in complete understanding -- she can't just have one drink. She flashes back to appalling some models by working blue -- "Wilhelmina *Slutter!* Get it?" -- and then her face became a cold mask of hatred and death when she saw poor dumbshit Christina, and attacked just as Marc's jaw was dropping in the elevator, out of the front of which he'd just shoved her. Claire, being fall-down drunk, fell down on the pregnant woman, who carried her to the ladies', where Alexis was just like hanging out staring at Cherokee Bat and Witch Baby in the mirror and looking like she was pregnant with an entire country, and Alexis thanked Christina and sent her on her way.

Jump to Alexis, who's all about apologizing for her drunkard mother and explaining she had her own shit going on. She puts the girls right in their places and waves a finger around kind of boredly, and tells them that her whole life is about looking poised and maintaining the illusion she was born female, so when she forgets her estrogen and, say, a giant random facial hair makes an appearance, it can make you want to push a boring Scottish moron down some stairs sometimes. She says she didn't even notice Christina, because she was so intent on caring for her mother and not getting old lady barf on her new Donna Karan. Marc's all, "Girl, I hear you because I am a homosexual."

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The three of them regroup as Betty explodes with amazement that people have lives and things that happen to them even when she's not around. Amanda gets very nervous when Betty mentions her credit problems, pointing at Marc, and it's sweet. Marc worries because it really is starting to look like Daniel did it: "And I am genuinely surprised." Betty protests that, again, all three of them know better, and there's another amazing, bizarre conversation between Marc and Amanda where he suggests that Wili can help "prove it," and Amanda's like, "Prove what?" and Marc goes, "Prove that Daniel's innocent," and without even pausing or looking at him, Amanda just goes, "Oh. I didn't understand that part." So fantastic, and it goes on: Marc pushes the Wili doll down the stairs. It's kind of dark how the limbs go, like, this way and that. Marc and Amanda agree that the mannequin is way too skinny, and they need something grossly fat that could make a convincing pregnant woman. AWESOME. They are totally going to throw Betty down the stairs to solve a mystery! For *science*!

Betty can't even believe it, which makes it all the more amazing when they grab her from either side like *Lord Of The Flies*, and then all three of them go down together, landing in the dust that was all over Daniel's raincoat. OMG. Except for how he owns one-of-a-kind shoes whose distinctive tread was already found at the scene, so like...

Wili's haranguing Christina about Barbara Walters appearances and the like when Christina starts weeping and explains about how Sick Boy showed up and mumbled some garbled

nonsense that she was somehow able to understand, and is dying. I would love if Christina were like, "So can I have my soul back now?" But Wili's face is a war between Botox and sadness, so that wouldn't be appropriate. She offers that experimental treatments are often tricky that way, but the sadness and respect in her face are pretty touching. I always thought she loved Bradford, and he's dead. You know? Christina rolls over to cry some more after asking Wili to give her a minute alone, and Wili sighs and feels bad for her. Aww.

Betty hangs out at Daniel's desk, looking for more ways to "accidentally" destroy his life, and finds the security tape in his briefcase, then must back away all awkwardly and weird as Daniel finds her going through his shit and acts in no way menacing toward her, regardless of her Chihuahua-like shivering and tics. He thanks her for her faith in him, and doesn't seem to notice the W hump under her top as she's leaving for home, so that she and Ignacio can talk about Hilda's grotesque life choices and Betty can strain something trying to get the focus back on her by comparing the two unrelated situations. See, the parallel is that they thought they knew Hilda -- the original real one, who is neither an idiot nor selfish to the point of negligent malice -- and found out she's just trash after all; meanwhile over here, Betty thought she knew Daniel -- the real one, who doesn't push people down stairs -- only to possibly find out that she was right, but possibly not.

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There's a completely idiotic thing about how Hilda's made -- and is currently, at this very second making -- a huge gross mistake, but after all is "a good person," which I guess gets her off the hook somehow. I hate that so much. All you are is your behavior. If you're acting like a bad person, you're a bad person. Stop doing it, and go back to being a good person again. It's that simple. There are a million ways of expressing the idea that Betty knows Hilda's capable of better and loves her regardless, but that useless "good person" thing leaves a [Big Brother](#) taste in my mouth too easily. It's something a stupid person would say.

Blah blah, is she naïve or the most amazing person ever for being naïve and whatever, the whole point of Betty Suarez is that she's smart enough to be pessimistic, and *chooses* to be optimistic, and that's why she is strong. Betty's belief in people and faith in herself is not a symptom of some greater retardation; it's the reason I love the show. This has come up three times in three episodes, but it's like, you don't have to be innocent or particularly naïve to believe the best of people. You just have to do it. So they pop the tape in and rather than Daniel shoving a Scottish girl down some stairs, he's fucking some girl on the Xerox machine. Betty's funny: "Ew! Daniel! This is dirty! ...And awkward." Ignacio just kind of stands there feeling weird.

Betty drops the tape on his desk -- how great is it that his first week back it's still so scary in there? -- and starts yelling at him about how she had to watch him fuck some girl with her dad, which admittedly is yucky, and he stands up and explains that he's borrowing Ignacio's storyline from last year and is seen here boning Holly, that forgettable State Department liaison who's helping him retain custody of the awful French child. He's worried that it will look like he's doing exactly what he's doing, so he was willing to do a little time in lockup until they found the real "culprit" to keep Holly's job and his custody case safe, because DJ gives him a reason or something. Betty throws her arms around him and immediately starts talking about herself.

After about ten minutes of Betty patting herself on the back for believing something so obvious that everyone on the show told her fifteen times in every scene, Daniel excuses

himself to "pick up DJ," which I think is code for "go throw up," and tosses her the raincoat, explaining that Alexis can just have it anyway: it looks better on her.

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Damn. So Alexis is outlined in light, apparently with the windows open or on a porch or something, when Betty comes to see her. She resists for a while, until Betty rudely points out that no matter how many things she does to herself, she will always have the gigantic size 11 feet of a cold-blooded XY killer, and then twists the knife by pointing out that not only did she do something horrible, i.e. push a moron with the Omen inside her down some stairs, she framed her brother for it. She further clarifies that this means Alexis is a bad person, not a good person, according to Betty's Big Old Book Of Bullshit she got from Gio last year and never gave back.

Alexis explains that she was trying to reconcile with Wili that night, right after the Meades pulled triple-rank on her in front of everybody (dumb) and was wearing a babydoll top in order to hide her gigantopregnancy (dumb) in no way whatsoever except to make her look like Betty Suarez after eating an entire circus tent, and Wili tells her to suck it, calling her "my freakishly tall girlfriend" -- which, why all the TS hate in this episode? -- and telling her it's only a matter of time before she fucks Alexis the hell over. She's just so fucking pregnant, I can't believe it. It's like she invented new ways to be huge. Anyway, she breaks a heel and finds a whisker and this is what turns her crazy. That age-old tale, coming true once again.

She hallucinates that Christina is Wili (hilariously, wearing her pregnancy gear and outfit) taunting her about ... something, I don't even get this part. Wilhelmina has a third of the company via her devil baby, and seems to feel like she has some power to exert over Alexis, with which Alexis agrees. Maybe I'm just forgetting what Wili has on her that would explain her complete lack of integrity or continuity. I'm willing to admit that is possible.

Shiny gold sneakers drop Claire on the chaise in the lounge, and shiny gold sneakers follow Christina into the stairwell, and all the shiny gold sneakers can think about is how much Wilhelmina has put their family through, and then Christina goes bouncing down the stairs. Alexis -- looking gorgeous, by the way, with big fluffy hair pulled back -- realizes she just totally got free of this show, called 911, and got the hell out of there. Alexis admits to Betty that it was unjustifiable and creepy and insane, and she feels terrible about letting Daniel take the fall for it, but it's not something she can undo. Betty says she needs to decide to tell Daniel herself, and confess and do her time and not trust the po-po.

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Betty also assures Alexis that it's okay she pushed a pregnant woman down the stairs, because she's a "good person." I give up.

"Breathe" by [Two Of Cups](#) plays over the best Betty montage in quite a while. No shows do really long, satisfying montages quite like this one -- and the end of it is one of the most effective, crazy scenes maybe ever. So the song starts over that last scene, as Betty's about to leave after telling Alexis that only she can prove what a "good person" she is.

Christina wakes up in the hospital surrounded by flowers; across the room Wilhelmina is reading *What To Expect*. When the flashbulbs attack, she stands up and closes the curtains, annoyed, and looks down almost caringly at ... others.

Ignacio watches Hilda do her nails and hugs her or whatever because she's such a good person.

Alexis confesses to Claire and Daniel; they're totally thrown, and Daniel wanders stunned through the office until he finds DJ, and holds him tight.

Betty finds her umbrella back in the stand by her door with a note from Val Emmich: "*Sorry I took your umbrella -- Jesse.*" She immediately high-fives herself and starts telling everybody in the entire world about how she's superior for being naïve and dumb.

Back at *Mode* Daniel and Betty watch Alexis work out the terms of her surrender with the cops. They commiserate about how you think you know your own sister, and then she gets written into being a sociopath. Just like that!

That song's still playing all dramatically as Alexis calls Claire over for one last bombshell: "When I was clearing out my office, I opened a piece of Daniel's mail." Claire tells her that, what with the attempted murders and shit, he'll let it slide. But Alexis shakes her head: "It was a paternity test." She leans in and whispers that Daniel isn't DJ's father -- she is. And you can't even deal with that because then it gets really sad and good-actiny and Claire just stares at her daughter and hugs her goodbye, and they handcuff her, and Alexis and her mother speak silently to each other as the elevator doors close. And once they're closed, she breaks.

That was awesome. Next week: Gio's back (boo!) and mad as hell (yay!).

LEGALITÉ, LIBÉRÉ, SORORITÉ

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 4 | Aired on 10.16.2008

Betty Suarez Land - One sister comes back from the extramarital darkside, while another sister and a son head off to France. A whole lot of goodbyes, a whole mess of Gio, and a serious lack of Amanda, Marc or Wili.

Daniel visits Alexis in jail for the whole Christina thing, and she sadly tells him about DJ's persona. Namely, that the person to blame for his annoying Francoteenistic presence is her former gonads. And looking at the fake-ass body double Daniel tackles next, she's about to blow another one. Wilhelmina blocks Claire's financial pressure on the District Attorney with pressure of a more whips-and-chains type, and her obvious S&M tendencies finally come to light. She gets him to up Alexis's charges from Misdemeanor Pushing A Gorgeous-But-Useless Pregnant Scottish Lass Down Some Stairs to Attempted Murder Of A Scion-Bearing Womb.

Later, Wili visits Alexis and offers a deal: clemency in exchange for Alexis's shares of Meade. She declines, and eventually it's Claire who strikes the deal: Alexis will split her shares between Wili's fake baby and Daniel, making Wili and Daniel co-EICs and giving her half of Meade overall. This is amazing, and Wili takes it in stride: 50% is hers now, 50% remains to be gotten.

Meanwhile, Gio has returned with a cart full of sandwiches and a notebook full of judgments, more than prepared to make Betty feel like a total asshole as usual. Excited to see him and hear all about the Rome trip she crapped on, she's shocked -- *shocked* -- when Gio's judgmental ass explains that the trip was horrible, she is horrible, and she is banned from both his life and the world of sandwiches. She spends the entire episode trying to make it up to him, but as he explains -- and he has a point -- she's not interested in changing anything, just making herself feel better. He finally admits, heartbreakingly, that she broke his heart, and she gets it. So once again, Gio shows up and Betty turns out to be a dick.

Speaking of, Tony's all over Hilda until a case of mistaken identity -- resulting from the use of Betty's apartment, of course -- leads Tony's wife to visit Hilda and beg her to make her sister Betty reconsider stealing her husband. This is brilliant because it's a total confrontation with the wife under the auspices of being a sympathetic confrontation with the wife, and pretty much redeems all of Hilda's stupidity this season. She acts her ass off, dumping Tony -- not on the *eve of*, mind you, but -- hours after he's actually told his wife they're through. Citing Santos, she says she cannot be a part of another woman's life falling apart. Which, of course, leaves Tony in the crapper, but: tough beans, cutie.

Daniel spends the entire episode trying to kidnap DJ, via Betty, so his wonderful and lovely French grandparents can't get him. Betty thinks the PO'd wife is the grandparents, so they hurry DJ down the fire escape into Gio's cheesy/meaty van and over to Coney Island for a day of fun, bad food, and ... overhearing Daniel admitting to Betty that he's not actually the father. DJ runs off and spends some time alone, but Betty has explained the point of this episode -- that Betty Suarez Land, Daniel Meade Land, and Hilda Suarez Land are fun places to visit but by living there you hurt everybody -- and Daniel lets DJ go with style. She takes this wisdom home, letting Gio be mad and admitting she didn't actually care that he was

mad so much as she was worried about being the good guy. All in all, good use of Gio, although Betty's sudden lack of introspection is, as usual, upsetting.

DJ leaves town, Daniel forgives Alexis as she leaves the country and the show for the time being, Claire and Alexis have another one of those wicked hardcore goodbye scenes that this year have become the emotional backbone of the show, and... I guess we get to see Daniel's reaction to Claire selling his ass to Wili next week. I, for one, cannot wait. We're back to status quo, which normally annoys me, but I trust the show enough to know that the loss of both Alexis and DJ can do nothing but raise the bar for next week. I'll miss you, Rebecca, and I will miss your freakishly large breasts. But I won't miss the bullshit storylines they hand you.

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Fashion Buzz is all about how this week, the "center ring" of the Meade Family Circus belongs to Alexis. There is an entirely different adorable cartoon showing how she threw a pregnant woman down "a pesky flight of stairs," and then Lloyd is all about trying to get as close to the visiting Daniel's limo as possible -- including, awesomely, screaming "Make a hole, bitches!" at the surrounding paparazzi. It would seem that Daniel has lost his gumption, standing as he is with his back to the crowd and a black trench over his body; Lloyd assumes this unfortunate circumstance has taken such a toll that Daniel has become some sort of "twisted hunchback," which is both a funny punchline on its own and points to the real punchline: Miss Betty Suarez, who flips the script on them and screams "HA!" at the disappointed press just as Daniel's slipping in through the back.

Betty calls to make sure he got in okay, and mentions how proud she is of him for supporting his sister. Even if, in this case, she pushed Betty's best friend #1 down the stairs and threw Betty's best friend #2, and her own brother, under the bus for it. He's not happy to be there either, but his mom told him to do it, and God forbid you say no to Claire Meade on a *Hot Flash* day. Anyway, Betty asks from deep inside her own personal universe, can she take the town car to work? The answer is no.

Daniel stares across the table at his sister, who looks as much "like crap" as it's possible for Pepper Dennis to look, which is to say not very, but they at least tried to smudge some mascara or something on her eyes and called it a day. She complains that they took away her eyebrow pencil, and he informs her that she's getting out with a fine and a few hundred hours customer service. He wonders aloud why Claire made him come down to say that in person, but of course Alexis has something to share with him.

Specifically, what I am trying to say is that Rebecca Romijn is about to explain to her brother, Eric Mabius, that she is the father of his Parisian child. And that is why I love *Ugly Betty*.

So he looks at her like, "Um, go for it," and she explains how thirteen years ago they both banged a woman in Paris, and Alexis was still a man, and the woman in question was DJ's mom, and... Daniel's just like, "Yes, get to the pertinent information." I mean, it's Daniel. You have to connect the dots for him. "I saw the results of the paternity test, and you're not DJ's father. I am." Daniel is totally stunned all the way through the rest of her speech, about giving up her parental rights and keeping this all out of the press. Basically, she thinks they can keep everything the same and nobody has to know that Daniel's not his son's father, and um, she's sorry... And that's when he jumps over the table and attempts to beat the shit

out of her. Or rather, her totally skinny stunt double who could probably take Eric Mabius, rock-hard pecs or no, any day of the week. Those are some rough bitches.

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Meanwhile, Betty is blathering on the phone about she's so proud of Daniel and whatever, he's so mature and growing as a person, and just when you're starting to believe that she's actually talking to dead air, because nobody fucking cares, Hilda stops ignoring her and asks once again if she can use Betty's in-town apartment to meet with her married boyfriend. Betty explains that that was a one-shot deal based on the fake idea that they wouldn't fuck like disgusting pigs, but fool me once... Hilda whines that Ignacio walked in on her boyfriend taking a shower for no damned reason in Betty's living room, so they never even got to talk about his marriage, much less make out. Betty agrees to one last visit, but threatens to change her locks after this, and then sees something that makes her scream. Me too: a little tiny sandwich douche with a chip on his shoulder.

Again under the assumption that anybody cares, she shrieks, "Oh my God, Gio's back!" Hilda points out that it's totally going to be weird, what with Betty dumping him basically after he asked her to go to Rome. True, like, not even Gio deserves to hear, "Spazzing around to a horrible Madonna song and biking with lesbians is absolutely preferable to spending two weeks in your company. Sorry for dicking you around for an entire season and then spitting on your romantic gesture for no good reason." Betty's take is different, because as she remembers that conversation, he smiled hugely when she did this, and told her to have a wonderful trip across the lesbian landmarks of America. Hilda knows, of course, that this is a fantasy and yet another sign of Betty's early-onset dementia, but that selfsame dementia hangs the fuck up on her.

Oh man, that "Breathe Me" song just came on shuffle and it occurred to me: you know what would be a great storyline? If Betty got some horrible disease. I'm not being mean and she wouldn't have to die of it, but it would give her a chance to be strong in some actual circumstances instead of the ones she keeps creating for herself, plus everybody would be nice to her and show they care, and I like when Wilhelmina has feelings... Oh wait. They already did that storyline. And now he's back from Rome. *Buongiorno!*

Betty clodhops herself directly at Gio and envelopes his sexy self in the sweaty meaty Suarez love, shaking him within inches of his life and scaring the life out of him. Peeling himself out of her arms like a rabbit trying to get away from an overenthusiastic kindergartner, he drops a short distance to the floor and hands her a sign: the braceface *de La Fea* with a big old Ghostbuster circle over it. Apparently, he will tell her nothing of Rome, nothing of himself, and in fact she is banned. From both his *sandwiches* and his *life*. I wonder really which bothers her more.

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In Gio's version of the dumpery, she was like, "Truth is, I would rather be all alone than go with you," and then spit on his shoes. Which frankly makes more sense, of the two versions. She protests that it's a lie, and that she certainly didn't spit, and he says sometimes when she talks fast, she spits. She gets all dog with a bone, because you simply do not call Betty a bad person without suffering the overbearing consequences of her trying to show you the error of your ways, and follows him all over the world like that Family Circus dotted line until he spills how horrible Rome really was.

Two weeks in the most romantic place on earth, and he was alone and broken-hearted, and all the reservations were under her name because the arrangements were a gift from Daniel, so all the time it was "Welcome Signor Suarez" and "Can I get you anything Signor Suarez," it was like Betty Suarez Land up in that bitch. Yeah, that sounds awful actually. I always thought it would be horrible to break up with somebody famous because instead of it being like a telephone you bought together or a movie you both liked, it's all magazines and all commercials and all billboards maybe forever. And I understand Rome is like that, but with Betty Suarez.

She says it can't have been all bad, and asks if he found "his flavor" like his Mario Batali did, and he says that he did, and it was this special kind of awesome Scamorza in Puglia that comes from a cow called Luisa who lived quite the life of hand-feeding, pampering, massages, etc. All the things Gio would have done for Ugly Betty, but no: she would not produce the cheese of love. She preferred to keep her love-cheese to herself. And it gets worse, because even after discovering that heaven -- not to mention Bridgeport pizza toppings -- can come from a cow, and all the changes to his lifestyle that discovering one's flavor can bring about, the whole thing was confiscated at JFK and he went back to a Scamorza-free existence. It was all the more cheese hellish for having tasted cheese heaven, and apparently this moment -- watching the customs agents chow down on this freaking amazing cheese -- brought him to an epiphany. In case Amanda's listening in, he helpfully translates: "A moment of total clarity." Drink! It's not Freedom, but it was still unnecessary!

Now, if you've been watching the show you knew this long before Gio did, but don't let your utter lack of surprise take away from the beauty of this discovery on the cheese- and meat-laden journey of Gio's life: "I hate you. You're not a nice person."

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He reiterates that she is banned for Gio's Deli and Gio's Life, and she straight up tells him he's wrong and that he is not allowed to bust this particular move, but the real problem is that he called her on her essential Ugly Bettiness, because without that what is she? "*I am a very nice person*. And you can't hate me, because we're friends!" Not getting the logic there, but the response is amazing: everything goes black and white and he shoots scary red lasers from his eyeballs, down the hall, up her spine, into her fear centers. It's awesome. Betty understands on a basic level that Gio is no longer fucking around, and gasps. "OMG! He hates me!"

Later in Daniel's office, she's complaining that Gio suddenly hates her, even though the truth is that he's hated her as long as he's known her, but all she wants to do is make it up to him, and finally she notices that Daniel's hand is in a pitcher of ice from where he slugged a tranny in jail, and Betty, hilariously, is like, "Daniel, we talked about you fighting! You suck at it!" Like she sat him down. I love that. He won't tell her what happened, because the weird logical leap you have to make this week is that he's hell-bent on keeping DJ's paternity a secret from Betty. That's like all he cares about is kidnapping a Freedom child and making sure Betty doesn't know who the father is. It doesn't make a hell of a lot of sense, but at least this week they attempt to explain it.

"Oh, okay. Because yesterday, you had me check a mole on your 'lower back,' but today boundaries?" She applauds this development/hypocrisy, but doesn't actually care about any of this anyway, because OMG what if a rude sandwich maker whom she treated horribly

continues to be both rude and in pain? Daniel immediately recognizes the particular Scamorza she's talking about, because his friend Mario uses it, and Betty OMGs because Batali is Gio's hero, and instead of doing some awesome thing like actually introducing Gio to Mario Batali or setting up a lunch date at the sandwich shop, she just commands Daniel to get some of this magical cheese from Mario so she can give it to Gio. Daniel tries to mention how things are really dicey w/r/t DJ right now and he's got a lot on his plate, like kidnapping for example, and Betty just screams at him to get the cheese with crazy wild eyes and Twinkie froth all on the mouth. I do love Betty when Gio's around, don't you?

Marc brings in Wili's coffee, and without looking up she asks unctuously, "*How's my baby?*" He starts giggling and hopping and bouncing all around because he apparently gets squirrely when she call him that, and then her scary plastic visage goes, "*Face?*" and he realizes she's asking about the real baby. Okay, well Christina and "her terminal Scotsman" are apparently at a spa somewhere, and are malingering. Wili tells Marc to remind Christina that her contract "limits extracurricular womb activities," and he fights on behalf of all of our rising lunch when he promises to make the attempt to say those words without killing himself. They discuss how Alexis got off with community service -- "If I knew this was the way the system worked, I woulda tried to kill more often," quoth Wilhelmina -- and Marc is just incensed: Christina tries to off Wili's offspring and gets off with a slap on the wrist. Altogether an offing outrage. Oh, Marc. You'd look much better out of those puns. He follows Wili around as she processes the situation aloud, agreeing with every statement no matter how contradictory, until he's worked himself into a corner, and asks what the eff she's talking about. "Get your lips off my ass and get the DA on the phone." Dude, a good assistant can do both.

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The lawyer explains that, thanks to the little blank double carriage return and/or web page between this sentence and the last one, the DA has bumped Alexis's "horrific" crime to attempted murder, no bail. Claire gets wild, of course, and says they won't be going to trial: "I am not putting my daughter's future in the hands of people too stupid or lazy to get out of jury duty," goes the old refrain, but Alexis is so tired due to being a mother and a father at the same time, and just wants to go home to all 6'2" of Jerry O'Connell's hot ass and have a billion kids for a second, so maybe she should just go to jail for the terrible, nonsensical thing she did. The lawyer agrees, because he knows a losing proposition when he sees it, but Claire remains unconvinced. Between Alexis's innate goodness, the handsome Meade contributions to the DA's election funds, and her own insane force of will, "Mommy will make this all better." I love Claire, but it gives me something like a hot flash of terror when she says shit like that, because the only thing more powerful than love is the psychotic break.

Claire calls the DA, and while he's clearly in straits of some kind, he takes time to point out that her calling him while he's prosecuting her daughter is really inappropriate. Claire wants Alexis picking up trash on the West Side Highway like he promised, but sadly, the DA is a political figure who can't be seen as soft on people who toss pregnant women down stairs, no matter how pointless those women are, how horrific the horrors their wombs contain, or how much money the accused commands. *There cannot be a different standard of justice for the rich*, he says, with a fucking straight face. That alone makes me want to tie him up and beat him, but as we'll see that's been proficiently covered.

Claire points out that the different standard of justice for the rich was (always) on the table when she gave him obscene amounts of election money, but hey: his hands are tied. By Wilhelmina Slater, wearing a basque and some kind of jungle gear, who has him strapped to the bed and reaches out to click off his bluetooth with her riding crop. Hot. She threatens to "hold him in contempt" if there are further interruptions, and she shoves that thing in his face so ruthlessly that he comes before it even touches him. But if you'll pardon my ignorance, I always thought the stereotype was that you get to do the thing you don't always do, in these scenarios, like the powerful on-top dude gets peed on or tied up or naughty and punished or whatever the opposite thing is, but like, if Wili spends her playtime being a dominatrix, doesn't that mean either A) we still don't know all the things Wili fits into her day, or B) all day every day is one long S&M trip for her? Because the latter possibility is amazing.

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Tony still wants to pretend that there's something remotely romantic about his relationship with Hilda, whining about the fact that they're having a picnic on Betty's stupid apartment floor when they could be doing it outdoors where God can see their sin, and Hilda's like, "You know what's romantic is ants crawling on your skin. And dog crap." He's all over her, and she's like, "Okay, but we actually do have to talk. These little meetings must be more than implausible Freedom farce tableaux where my dad walks in. Also talking." She lists a few of the many horrible things about this storyline, like the ten people they're dissing by having this conversation, what will happen if he finds out his mom's a skank (too late on that one), etc. Tony claims he's leaving the wife, and Hilda's like, "I swear to God if you're fucking with me" but he promises: he's telling wifey this afternoon. No more "dates" in the back of a car, no more Ignacio assuming they'll burn in hell. That's such good news that instead of leaving until after he actually makes this lie come true, Hilda makes out with him. Later on he's leaving, and the wife has followed him, and she reads the nameplate on the door -- "B. Suarez" -- and the Freedom farce comes flooding right back.

Amanda: "Hey Betty, a pair of sweaty smelly balls arrived for you." They belong to Mario Batali. Ew, not like that! Betty gets so excited about the Scamorza that Amanda assumes it's her lunch, and then hilariously produces a drawerful of some kind of packaged diet product that I gather has gone on the market recently, and compares one slice of the heavenly cheese to ten of her prepackaged diet meals. Then she starts stacking them up, apparently to make good on this ratio.

Betty takes that lawyer guy to Daniel's office, slapping his hand away from the cheese because she has no manners whatsoever this week. The lawyer begs to "step in" and handle the custody fight, because he wants to at least do one thing right for the Meades this week. Turns out that sometime in the last five seconds, the *grands-parents* have subpoenaed all the evidence in the custody suit, including the paternity test, so Daniel's no longer the father in anybody's mind except Betty's. Additionally in the last two of those five seconds, Alexis gave up her parental rights, and the *grands-parents* have temporary custody, and he's filed a motion to suspend but if they get the kid to Freedom soil, Daniel can kiss him goodbye as both son and nephew. Wow, are we working on wonky-ass [UES](#) time right now or what? When the hell did all that happen?

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Amanda makes her little prepackaged meal in the breakroom microwave, demonstrating just how easy it can be, and Betty retrieves her sweaty smelly balls from the fridge just as Daniel finds her and asks her to kidnap DJ. Betty does not care because she has manufactured a plan to waste most of Gio's day by ordering a bunch of sandwiches to her house of whoredom and then trapping him there until she can berate him into not hating her anymore. Good plan, Smellyballs. Daniel doesn't actually care about any of this, because only a lunatic would care about any of this, and Betty -- apparently having not learned her lesson last week -- bugs Daniel about explaining why she needs to kidnap the child if he's the real live MoPo daddy, but Daniel won't tell her and says it's a complex issue involving Freedom bullshit and how about you shut up and do your job, and if you don't, they'll take DJ away due to some *manoeuvres compliquées* and whatever. Mostly I want to know if the whole "Freedom soil" thing is literally true, like how Dracula had to bring Romanian dirt with him to England, because if so, let's get this done.

Gio brings the sandwiches to Betty's apartment, where she and the Freedom demon child are more than likely complimenting each other's hair in broken languages and generally talking about themselves as though they care about each other in any way. He spots the nameplate and realizes he's been hosed right before she drags him inside. DJ says hello, but in a way where you know he means, "The large American has kidnapped me and won't stop talking about the fucking *frommage*," and she shoves Gio up against the door so she can apologize the shit out of him, but then he smells the cheese, and tries to take the cheese without acknowledging her endless, pushy, slightly unnerving apology.

Just to be dicks she and the Freedom kid toss the smelly balls back and forth over his head. Which is just mean, because yes he is technically a "little person" as they're called these days, but he's also hotter than a summer barbecue on the sun and I think at that point the intense shortness is just not that remarkable a quality. He calls her an "Indian giver," and she tells him that is both outdated and culturally insensitive. Not to mention inaccurate, as the sweaty balls weren't a gift anyway, they were emotional blackmail, and they both know that. She and DJ nod to each other, because yes, a barely literate thirteen-year-old child with the haircut of a Kennedy compound rapist *should* be your first moral checkpoint when you're imprisoning a tiny broken sandwich maker in your own home.

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The Freedom people -- the male of whom is totally Jacques Pépin -- thank Daniel for taking care of their grandchild, and let him know that DJ has been sending back constant letters about how much he digs Daniel and his life here, but: "His family is here." Daniel points out that he is DJ's family, and they get all kinds of Freedom on him, with the thin old people lips and whatnot, and they basically trump everything when they note how their daughter is dead and DJ is all they have. Daniel can't face that one down.

Dude, would you rather be wicked rich in Paris or wicked rich in New York City? Given the fact that the American financial system turned into the opening credits of a dystopian science fiction thriller back in July -- "Back in 2008, nobody knew rescuing Fannie Mae would lead directly to a privatized apocalypse police state and end civil liberties as they knew them -- now mankind stands at a crossroads..." -- get my ass to gay Paris. Daniel tries to pretend he has no idea where Betty took the kid, which is in itself retarded, because: what, on day three she becomes a kidnapper perv, and that helps how? Luckily, Amanda's there to fuck it up for him, telling all three of them that she's got the kid at her Manhattan apartment. "You're welcome!" she sparkles, and tosses him a wink. Daniel is so sad because you gotta be some

kind of blowup doll to ruin an ill-advised kidnapping plot so blithely. Honestly, they both get into so much trouble when they're apart for even five seconds I wish somebody would just duct-tape Betty to him at this point.

Half-hour later and Betty's about five seconds from duct-taping Gio to the chair as she forces him to look at photo after photo from her tragic American tour. I cannot think of anything more precisely calibrated to make you hate a person. Irony. He points out that she's being a dick, and she's like, "Just picture me! Betty Suarez! Hanging off a cliff, fifty feet in the air!" Gio pictures the shit out of that. She lectures him about how only one percent of visitors actually make it to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, and thus she has learned she can do anything, even things that terrify her, thanks to the lessons she learned at his overbearing knee. "You pushed me to take risks! Like plagiarism! And sexual experimentation in the Mojave with lesbian cancer-surviving bicyclists! That's you, buddy! You changed my life! Into something weird and hard to understand! Thanks!"

"So. Breaking up with me made your life better." She's like, "No, listen!" Gio explains that the torture she's putting him through is all about making herself feel like something other than a total asshole for dumping him that way and then forcing him to process it in exactly the way she wants him to so she can get back to basics and starting dicking him around and hot/cold/ignoring him like she did all last year. The thing is, she lives in Betty Suarez Land, vision quest or no, and for once this is not about her, but about things she has no control over.

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She bleeps right over the truth of that statement like the names in a Russian novel and focuses on the part where her name happened. "I don't live in Betty Suarez Land!" Uh, you kinda do. "25 Teddybear Lane, Betty Suarez Land, USA." He explains that it takes two people to have a relationship of any kind, which is untenable when one of them -- in this case, him -- is totally uninterested. Case closed. Unless you're Betty, and then you just keep pushing: why though? Why not? How come though? Why wontcha?

"BECAUSE YOU BROKE MY HEART," he screams. It is awesome. Gio wins. Of course, Daniel calls right before Betty totally admits that she returned his jerkness tenfold, and she gets to opt out of this entire conversation too. The *grands-parents* have discovered where she is, and are on their way with Freedom speed. Meanwhile, Mrs. Hottie Diaz has arrived and is banging on the door, so she assumes that they are still on UES time and everything is happening louder than everything else, so she's like: They're heeeere.

You got Diaz screaming outside, Daniel squealing like a baby on the other end of the phone, DJ being utterly fucking useless as usual, and Gio in the middle of a life-changing breakdown, so what's Betty going to do? Toss the kid down the fire escape ("*escapé flambé*," for those students of *la belle langue* among us) and commandeer Gio's van. Yeah. Without blinking she pulls this shit. So Gio's like but isn't Daniel the father and she explains the bullshit about Freedom legalities and blah blah, but please don't take out the fact that your eternal hatred of me is now legitimate on Daniel or his stupid child, which does it, so they escape together.

And I mean, like the most annoying young hipster family in existence: Betty with her plastic glasses and bright yellow tights and those goddamned braces, tiny muscley Gio with the attitude and the gross cheese van and slight bisexual-or-a-painter vibe, and the long

flowing locks of a tweener whose pinkie contains more insouciant ennui than an entire class of American college freshman. They should only grab some moleskins and go to Park Slope, they'd vanish into freaking thin air.

Speaking of Brooklyn tragedies, is this the Kenley Kreation? Because Marc and Wili are wearing matching outfits that look like something the Mad Hatter called "trippy" and then made out with. They commiserate that prison reality is not living up to the fantasy at all, like so: "Where's all the scary beefy trade?" *Oh Marc*, Wili says tiredly, *We're in a women's prison*. "I know." Set and match! It's not even a joke, practically, it's just like ... what you would be thinking.

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Marc spritzes the phone for Wili so she tell Alexis that the power to forgive is one of the five dark powers she commands as a result of Freedom kissing Satan's anus at midnight, and maybe by the time the hurlyburly's done she can get Alexis out of there. "The District Attorney and I share certain ... enthusiasms." Alexis realizes that she got the charges jacked up in the first place to give Wili more bargaining room, and Wili is totally over the outrage: "We screw each other, it's what we do." She demands Alexis's shares of Meade in return for her French, and Alexis says she'd do a hundred years of scary old prison before she'd screw her brother over again. Just like she says every other time, but this time she means it: This time, Wili can screw herself. She takes off and Wili holds out her hand for more sanitization spritzing.

Gio drives them around aimlessly in the van as they try to come up with a good place to stash the kid, and she suggests *Swan Lake* to simultaneous pooh-poohing from both Gio and Daniel ("What!? Kids love the ballet. Justin loves the ballet..."), and Gio finally demands the phone so that the two men can figure it out without the worthless girl interfering. Ugh. Gio decides to take them to Coney Island for "dogs" and something called "the Cyclone." Yeah, you should definitely show DJ the worst parts of American culture, that's a good way to keep him here. "They may love you and have psychological stability the Meades can only imagine having, but on the other hand: Carnies!"

The wife goes to Hilda's shop and they have a long talk about how her husband, Tony Diaz, is secretly sneaking around with a woman. That woman? B. Suarez. "You don't have to pretend, I know what's going on." She begs Hilda to intercede on her behalf, and stop the meetings at the Manhattan apartment. She's been back since then -- just today, banging on the door, she could hear her with some kind of Freedom guy, meaning "Betty" must be some kind of insatiable slut. Hilda takes fake offense at this, and the wife sighs, because the Other Woman -- as usual -- is not actually the problem.

It's the Diazs' fault: they married young, they've been married a long time, they stopped hanging out and things went cold. The fact that she still loves him and hasn't cared to show it until now didn't even phase him: he said today he was in love with somebody else (Stop! UES time!). Hilda's amazing at that one: her happy-then-guilty-then-sad face is almost a blur. She asks if it's crazy to still be in love with her cheater husband, and instead of being like, "Have you seen his ass?" Hilda just shakes her head no. Wifey asks for just a chance to save her marriage, and slumps off all pathetic, and Hilda feels like an utter piece, and I'm back in her corner. What a brilliant way of working all the kinks out of that situation in which nobody's really the bad guy, which is much closer to the reality. And in only four episodes!

Betty having promised Gio when it's all done he can drive his meaty cheesy van far far from "Betty Town," they're all three doing a pretty good job of having fun. I mean, "fun" insofar as taking part in creepy nasty carnival delights is fun. It's a headspace thing but I've accomplished it in the past. You know what's weird? Shooting water, into a clown's mouth, until a balloon, coming out of its head, pops. I bet the person who invented that "game" died in prison. I just have a strong feeling that there was something dreadfully wrong with them in a way the authorities are trained to detect.

They send the contested dual-citizen child currently the subject of an international custody battle off to have some fun on Coney Island while they stand around being stupid and boring, and then Daniel comes up and he's like, "Where's my kid?" and they don't really know. He's fine with that. He explains that they're taking the Meade family jet to a country as yet TBA -- "What country has no extradition treaty with us? Iceland's a real country, right?" -- because the judge wouldn't grant a stay, of course, so Daniel finally explodes with the missing, obvious jigsaw piece that Daniel Junior is not actually his son... Just as DJ is walking up.

And I mean he gets ten kinds of Freedom about it too, like, running off in slow-motion while a *ballon rouge* floats impishly up into the sky and this cloyingly cute little girl with a cute little haircut makes cute little faces and hides her cute little laughter with her cute little hand and hides cute little garden gnomes and eats adorably serendipitous cr me br l e and ... I don't know. Johnny Depp eats some chocolate and realizes that even he must struggle at this point to remember why the name Vanessa Paradis sounds so nigglingly familiar.

But like damn, that was lazy writing: Daniel keeps this one obvious fact a "secret" the whole time, needlessly complicating an already-complex script, just long enough to scream it in front of the kid. The same thing happened on *Horseland* this morning. I normally don't watch it, but I'm obsessed with this early-morning show called *Cake* and it comes on right after it. On the upside, Gio notes heartlessly, DJ's English is getting pretty good.

They roam Coney Island at will and discuss how Daniel couldn't tell her the very simple truth because saying it out loud, like everybody has been doing the whole episode, would somehow "make it real." I guess specifically telling Betty would do this, is the point, because she's all Daniel has in his life that even approaches reality. Daniel tells her that Alexis was the actual sperm donor, which results in a pretty awesome *whoa* face, and Betty talks Daniel out of going on the run and fucking up his life and sense of the ways things work even more than Daniel's already been doing. In the process of talking Daniel through this, she realizes spontaneously that Gio is totally right about Betty Suarez Land, and somehow transmits this information about narcissistic solipsism to Hilda, wrapping up all three conflicts neatly. Gio appears and taps Daniel sweetly on the shoulder, having figured out where DJ went through his powers of knowing random shit for no reason except that even the show is tired of this storyline.

Wili finds Claire sitting at her desk and they have a super intense pissing match. "I went to a lot of trouble to get you a perfectly nice cubicle!" she says, and they talk about how Wili is all about destroying Claire's daughter's life as a power play for the company -- which is exactly what Alexis was doing when she tried to kill Wili's kid. Good point. Claire explains

that Alexis will never, ever give Wili control over Meade Publications, and Wili's like, "Then we don't have anything to talk about, so take your hot flash cold sweats off the upholstery."

But Claire's new plan to save everybody involves Alexis splitting her shares between the baby and Daniel, so that Wili will be an equal partner and they can be co-EICs. I was so bummed that Wili didn't get to play the Fey Sommers thing to the hilt, but this is even better. Trust the show, Tiger. In return, Wilhelmina will use her "influence" with the DA to get Alexis sprung. Wili knows Daniel won't be happy with his mother bartering away his legacy to French his jailbird sister, but Claire grins creepily and explains that human beings, unlike Wili, understand the concept of sacrifice, and that he will understand that this is about saving his sister. Wili gets in her face and pushes past her to her chair, thinking Botoxically about how that's dumb because you don't give things up to save your sister, you steal her meds and turn her into a psycho arsonist. Obviously.

Betty's grossed out by the viralpalooza under the boardwalk, but Gio knows he's right: no screaming tourists, the ability to be alone with his tiny Freedom thoughts, and also the chance to look up the skirts of all the lovely ladies of Coney Island. Welcome to hell. And of course Gio is right, and there's DJ having a Gallic meltdown in the dirt. Daniel approaches him and they talk for about six hours about how he said he was his Dad in every episode, but that wasn't true, but he still feels like his Dad, but he also doesn't really care that much, so he will be the crazy fun American uncle, and that's not as meaningless as it sounds, so in summation he totally loves DJ but doesn't really want him, and that is beautiful. And then they hug each other and it is totally facile, and Betty and Gio have slight feelings about each other that are not hate, and then it's just endless huggery under the boardwalk. Whatever gets that kid out of here, man, because I am over it.

Tony comes to Ignacio's house, where Hilda looks amazing just long enough to dump him. Why? Because he's married. But he totally just left his wife. And that's weird for him, but still no. He hasn't even realized how fucked that makes him yet, because Hilda is explaining that she doesn't want to be a part of whatever happens with his wife, because that's not her thing. Like, she's not necessarily the gunman that killed Santos, in this scenario, but she's still a witness to the murder, and who wants to be party to that shit? I can't say I blame her, although it sucks for Tony, but honestly all he had to do was leave the marriage, if he wasn't happy. He didn't have to use Hilda for that. They love each other like, so much, and he is so totally fine, but none of that matters because this is a story he's writing and she doesn't want to be a character in it. She cries, he leaves, Ignacio hugs her, it's pretty much the optimal ending for this story. Hilda's probably my favorite character on this show besides Amanda in her human form, so I'm glad she pulled it together finally.

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Back at the apartment, Betty hands over the cheese for a job well done, and tells Gio he was totally right about everything, as usual. In her own defense, though, she really did think they could be friends again, or as he puts it, "That's how you roll on Teddybear Lane." She thought she was being selfless, but there's no such thing, and it was all about her because it always is, which is fine if you're honest about it, but she really should have let him have whatever feelings he was having without trying to administrate them. And then she apologizes for hurting him so brutally. He admits spending the day with her was pretty great and that he shouldn't have been so quick to try and cut her off completely like that.

And then, awesomely, Gio says something that out of another mouth -- even his, before this episode -- would sound like the deepest, ugliest burn imaginable. It's like a hateful speech Adrian Grenier might have given Princess Mia in *Prada*, about how he's known her for a while, and she's great at her job, and swims with the sharks at *Mode*, and keeps Daniel's head above water, and how she will do great things one day. "I don't blame you for choosing yourself," he says, and totally means it, in the most awesome way. This is the first time I've ever been into Gio at all, so it figures that it's his parting speech. Congratulations on those sweaty, smelly balls. You earned them. She almost follows him out the door, but her phone rings and she thinks better of going after him.

Wili and Marc have a short conversation in which she looks at the new 50/50 split in the best way possible, which is that she's accomplished half her goal. After all, six months ago she was just a salaried employee and cabinet member of the creative team, and now she owns half of a publishing empire. Marc agrees that, expressed that way, it's less distressing than it is totally hot.

Daniel tells Alexis she's looking pretty good, no jailhouse tattoos etc. She and her mother bond over the intense life experience of being thoroughly deloused. As usual, the whole scene is mostly about Claire, even when she's not talking. I mean, she doesn't take her eyes off Alexis's face, or blink, the entire time. She just loves those kids so much. What a good actor Judith Light is. Alexis is heading out to Provence, so Daniel gives her leave to get to know DJ. She starts crying and apologizes for sleeping with her brother's girlfriend, hilariously, and he apologizes for "trying" to punch her, but Betty's right: "You suck at fighting."

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Alexis and Claire have yet another really touching goodbye scene while some kind of sad Coldplay music plays, and as usual it's the most moving part of the episode. You could have an entire episode of these two women staring at each other mutely while weeping and it would still be the best thing ever. Seems like half of every episode actually has been that so far, and it's always fantastic. She nods at Daniel and heads for the helicopter.

In Queens, Justin rubs his mother's shoulder while she cries; her father brings in tea. Betty enters and kisses her father and hugs Hilda. Sorry you got burned by acting like a whore. They all cuddle up into a big Suarez pile on the couch, and Justin climbs on top. I'm going to need some quality Justin time next week, I'm sorry. It's been too long. At the helipad, Daniel finally runs to his sister and throws his arms around her; her eyes over his shoulder are joyous and sad, and she locks eyes with Claire again while Betty and Ignacio force-start the post-breakup overfeeding process. Daniel and Claire watch the helicopter take off, and Claire's stricken face is the saddest thing you've ever seen.

You've got Hilda, the mother, and Wili the fake mother, and Betty being everybody's mother and constantly missing her own mother and trying to replace her mother, and Amanda trying desperately to understand her own mother and find her own strength from that... I think probably any fashion story is a story about mothers and daughters. Makes sense. But the best of them all has always been Alexis and Claire. Alexis is the best thing about Claire; Claire is the best thing about Alexis. I didn't realize how sad her leaving the show was, until I thought about it that way.

BONED BY THE LOHAN

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 5 | Aired on 10.23.2008

Granny Pants - Betty tries to destroy Kimmie Keegan, and ends up making her a fashion goddess; Daniel and Wili accidentally go on a perfect date.

...Meanwhile, Justin and some Zac Efron kid are like, "We can't even spell the word bottom, but let's see what happens." I know that's no way to start a recaplet, but trust me, it's like half the episode.

Justin talks Hilda into bringing Quarterback Zac Efron in, making this show no longer about Undergrad Fat Girl Fantasy Date like usual, but also Undergrad Fat Girl's Queer-Ass Brother or Cousin And It's So Hot We Don't Have To Get Weird. Mostly because he's just being adorable, while his aunty is engaging herself in nastiness so bad I'm listening to the Weepies as I write this. Remember them? I've got six scarves wrapped around my shit as I write this. Can't quit now, thanks to Betty's horrible fictional life. Why won't Lindsay Lohan kiss my giant gay face? Or at least Betty's?

Meanwhile for actual, Amanda goes on a party date with Kimmie, because she (La Sam/Lohan) is all about joining the *Mode* family and Amanda is all about her popple-headed bisexual vibe, obvs. (PS: not bisexual, giant lesbian, obviously since she was ten, stop being stupid, so was I, it's not weird to know that unless you make it weird you creep, you're creepy shut up.) Amanda and Marc fall all over her, because not only has she been Disneydorable her whole life but they are so her people: "Walt Disney sewed our vaginas/penises shut when we were six, what now?" Betty, of course, acts like a total sadsack and gives Kimmie a pantsing. Just because she's an asshole, no other reason. Not that she has done anything since that one food fight.

Everybody is appalled. I hate when everybody but Betty is appalled. Especially when in real life it would take one stiff uppercut from Sammie Ronson saying some Susan Powter shit and behave yourself. And she continues to feel just that way, no matter how retarded she acts. Daniel can't... tell, because Betty kind of sucks. And meanwhile, Kimmie knows George Clooney. 1) Hmm. 2) Not even fags are as pomo as *Ocean's 13*, eff you very completely-unrealistic-gallon-of-milk-very-much. And how was Daniel's internet date?

Um, perfect. ...It was with Wilhelmina. Which you may think is hot? But really, it's hot. I mean. You knew it was coming, her dick is bigger than yours, and here we go: he's all romantic, she's all Botox, I dare you to say who's hotter. Wili and Daniel all of a sudden respect and care deeply for each other, and they both can't wait for Kimmie to be their new [Serena](#)/Associate Coolness Editor. Pulling, of course, from my/your/our Mean Girl Betty 101: "OMG What I Stole Your Job? Love The Shoes." If I felt like she figured out one mothereffing thing, I would give her some credit, but come on.

Which magically-assfaced Betty can't help but see as the ultimate in bullshit, but of course the kind of bullshit that is inside her heaven. What will she do? Nothing, I'm guessing, until somebody tells her what to do. Bat For Lashes, at this point, has given up on homegirl. So Betty swallows whatever ounces of self-respect Gio left her, Kimmie explains basic Mean Girl shit to her, and Betty ends up exactly where... She wanted to be all along: A total victim.

Oh, Betty. I still love you, but damn. Next week, again we'll fight it out. You need so very many warlike hugs.

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Yeah, so the recaplet? I'm gonna plead the Lohan on that one. "Exhaustion"! The silent killer! Now let's do this in a linear, non-eyelid/toothpick-scenario fashion. It's all mortar fire and guns and stuff for a second, or maybe *There Will Be Blood*, but then you realize it's a photo shoot for *Mode*. Daniel runs around practicing stylism on them, and ends up plopping a helmet on Betty's head and putting a bayonet in her hands. It's like the cutest outfit she's ever worn. Betty takes Claire aside and worries at her about how Daniel's not processing the DJ thing and how he lost his son, who is not his son, to his brother who is now his sister. Claire points out that on the spectrum of Meade family vices, workaholism is a lot better than pushing pregnant ladies down stairs. Then Betty spots a puppy, and stops caring about Daniel, because a big part of Betty's wounded brain is just hugs and puppies and popsicles, all the time.

Wilhelmina has brought lots of puppies and little kids for "Puppy Love," which conflicts with the shoot that they're already doing, "Love Is A Battlefield." Also, PETA can kiss her ass because it's not real Dalmatian she's wearing, silly: it's rare albino leopard. Betty has been running ragged trying to do everything Daniel's way, plus Wili's way, and we watch that play out. Daniel's like, "Kill the puppies!" And Wili screams, "Daniel Meade KILLS PUPPIES!" and Daniel screams about how she doesn't support our troops. Then they yell at each other about how they are both the Editor-in-Chief and it's like all of a sudden they're having anger and passion fights or something dumb. Claire is kind of horrified by the way the two shoots have blended together: little kids in gas masks, soldiers kissing puppies, bored models standing around. It's actually totally awesome, but this show doesn't understand awesome anymore.

Kimmie is at Betty's desk when she gets back, and drops the fact I somehow missed which is that the burger place she was working at with Ignacio in Queens was called Flushing Burger. That's amazing. She explains to Betty in a somewhat humorous monologue that Betty's philosophy of believing in yourself and showing initiative and adaptability doesn't work if you are, like Kimmie, a total loser. She describes post-high school life as a slide into suck, and wonders if people will ever applaud again when she walks in the room. She doesn't really hit any jokes we didn't hit from last time -- the boyfriend she hates is dating her ex-stepsister, her hilarious Lyme disease might be flaring up -- but it's pretty funny that she is coming to Betty with this information, because not even Betty knows how bad her trip around the US has turned her into a dipshit. Daniel walks in at the wrong time and Kimmie fast-talks her way into a job at *Mode*.

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Christina actually says "Och," when Betty goes down there to bitch about how Kimmie made everybody call her "Pig Latin" in school. Stuart update is that now his death disease is only kicking in whenever he doesn't want to do the dishes, but it is still very real. Christina asks Betty to have yet another flashback about high school and the awfulness of Kimmie, in case we didn't get the memo that she sucks. Betty, looking fucked up, sat with Kimmie on the first day of school, and then Kimmie asked her to get a bottle of water for her -- like you do -- and then pantsed her. Winning, I guess, the admiration of a love of her fellow students? Did the person that wrote this ever go to high school?

Anyway, they called her "Granny Pants" after that. Christina tells her that now it's her turn to fuck up Kimmie's life even more than she already has, because "that's karma, Granny Pants." Christina sucks so bad, are you kidding me with this? The only legitimately funny thing of the episode so far happens, with Betty staring out into space quietly asking Christina not to turn Granny Pants into a thing: "That was a secret..." she says, vaguely, and it's really funny and spazzy and good. I'm glad America Forever and Vanessa Williams and Judith Light and Eric Mabius's pectoral muscles are still trying, at least.

Speaking of implausible high school experiences, Justin is going to be auditioning for *Billy Elliot* on Broadway, and then gets menaced by this kid who's like Zach Efron, but ... human? I guess he has bangs and I'm reacting to the bangs, is all. "I am sure this happened to Patti Lupone," Justin hisses while he's picking up his books, showing that combination of utter cluelessness and tryhard obliviousness that his aunt Betty has made into a lifestyle. Also, the little nameless girl he expositos all of this to: was she in the mini-Betty episode where the nerdy girls came to *Mode* and then acted like assholes? She looks sort of British.

Betty is not really into talking to Kimmie or dealing with her at all, but then Christina's awful advice makes her act like a bitch. She sends Kimmie over to talk to Wili, in her little tiny stupid backpack. She says Wili's name weird, talks about how she has Wili's jacket but from Ross, and then says the word "armpit," all in one sentence. Wili is so horrified by Kimmie she doesn't know what to do, so she summons Marc, who literally hisses in her face. Then Kimmie looks like she's going to throw up and Betty gloats.

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Back home, Betty justifies her bitchy behavior and Hilda screeches about God knows what. Finally Betty asks why she is crazy now, and Hilda says she has chosen Anger over Depression. Ignacio says it's been a treat, and then asks Betty what if she chose Not An Asshole over Asshole. Betty justifies a whole bunch more and Ignacio basically bullies her into being a good person.

Marc and Amanda discuss ways to torture Betty, but fall in love with Kimmie's horrible style instead: "Cute tiny backpack. Do you put all your tiny scrunchies in it?" That's the next most hilarious thing. She does, she keeps her tiny scrunchies in her tiny backpack. She is also wearing like a denim shrug thing with little ruffles on it. She looks like that little girl in grade school that you knew would be pregnant by junior high and then she was, like, that exact shade of denim. Kimmie thanks them for their interest and starts to talk about how she hasn't bought clothes since high school because living in Queens is like *Mad Max* and it isn't like living at all, etc., and Amanda gives her the flapping lips/zip it gesture: "N. I." Betty feels a tinge of remorse but I, like Amanda, am N. longer F. I. in what Betty's emotions are doing.

Kimmie pratfalls all over an editorial meeting and Betty tells her to get the eff out of there. "Throw a poncho and sideburns on that girl and she could be you!" notes Marc. Marc and Amanda, you should share your writers with the rest of the show. It would thank you. Wili wants the trainwreck fired, she says, just as Kimmie's walking randomly into a glass door and the whole world laughs just like with the Granny Pants, and Betty's essential nicenesses jump out at you like, "Boo! It is so hard to be fat and spazzy here at *Mode*! I will take her under my wing with a side of ranch!" Everybody looks at Betty and pretends to care but they don't even try that hard.

Betty walks Kimmie through the place screaming at the top of her lungs about this random acronym she has created: ARG. NI! A is for "anticipate," which is to know what people need before they do. When Kimmie asks what the eff she's talking about, Betty hilariously tosses her a handout and goes, "...I anticipated you would ask that." Wow, you're good, Kimmie says. This part's kind of good, like, in the on-crack way that this show is good. Betty keeps screaming. R is for "research," which is to know everything that there is to know, like, don't ask Wili for receipts even if Betty tells you to.

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Also, w/r/t Wili, "avoidance is key," because if you screw up with her you could be fired, or possibly die. Why is Betty screaming so loud? She negotiates Marc into giving her the receipts instead, in return for tickets to a Colin Farrell premiere. Man, if he was on this show at the same time as Lindsay what would happen to the world? Kimmie's amazed. That's G is for "gumption," which Betty still thinks she kind of has. Then she tries to teach Kimmie to say Wili's name like a thousand times, and it's pretty funny, especially when Betty just finally breaks down (after "Hellmamina") and shouts, "What is wrong with you?" Then she gives her a lame pep talk that ends in "2, 4, 6, 8, Kimmie Keegan used to be great!"

Claire has a conversation with Daniel in which she says DJs name about eleven times in every sentence, but also includes a video game called *Street Wars V: Revenge Of The Pimps*. Daniel catches on to her subtle DJ-dropping game and says he doesn't want to talk about it. OMG Daniel like you actually care. "Wah wah, I had a child for three minutes and then it went away, and now all I have is these whores and a pile of blow but they are so meaningless without an annoying French child with whom to share them." He cries her a river of tears and she's like, "I love that you want a family, no matter how terrible that is!" And then he's like, "My clock is ticking!" This is preposterous. Claire points out that Bradford managed to knock some people up from the grave, so surely Daniel's family is workable.

Ignacio and Hilda watch the sudden gay nuclear explosion of Justin and are amazed, and Ignacio tells her to stop riding him all crazy and obsessed show mom like she is. Hilda's like, "He is being bullied! By this one hot kid who is clearly gay for him! It is a nightmare and only Broadway can save him!" But man, if all the shit Ignacio decided to warn, chasten, moan or otherwise berate you about turned out to be real, we would be living in a nightmare werewolf world.

Kimmie got Daniel an appointment for some kind of manicure, and this showed that she did all the steps of ARG, and then Kimmie wants to go out and party with Betty. "I tried to get in before, but it's like they could smell the Bridge & Tunnel on me, but now we're VIP!" Betty doesn't seem to realize that toxic is forever, though, because she's like, "Sweet! Kimmie wants to go clubbing with me!" I think that Betty got Lyme disease from her adventures in nature. Or oh, what if like halfway through this season Peg comes running to tell everybody that Betty hit her head on the Grand Canyon and is blocking out a horrible crime she did, or some lesbian bicycle sex, and that's why she's so stupid now.

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Daniel asks Betty to proof his dating service application -- "Since the last woman I picked ended up burning my house down, I thought I'd trust the professionals" -- and she questions everything on it, then rewrites the whole thing. Net result of this scene is that Daniel is adorable doing that tree thing with the yoga, and Betty pisses herself about

partying with Kimmie because it was such a big deal one hundred billion years ago. This whole "grown nerd gets stuck back in high school" thing, I never got that. It's like, didn't you do enough drugs after high school to effectively burn out those parts of your brain? And if not, why not, ya nerd?

Kimmie brings Amanda a giant cookie, and she's all, "You're pretty. I just assumed you weren't because you're a friend of Betty's." Kimmie goes on and on about how great she is at making copies, and Amanda tells her what's important is skating by on your looks, then brutally cuts off her tiny backpack.

Billy Elliot auditions, where Hilda is still all the fuck over his life. Bully stud is there and he's all like, "My mom said I have to do this if I want to play football." First of all: no. No she didn't, no that did not happen, in any way. I love how Broadway auditions are just like this total drag for everybody. And secondly, now both Justin and Bully Stud are professional-level dancers, but nobody knows that? This is effed. The human horrors that are casting agents for Broadway shows, when looking for talent, you know their first stop? Flushing. And lastly, like not one of the scary Broadway moms is there with a blowgun waiting to take out these two unknowns for even daring to show up? Not to mention that Justin refers to Bully Stud as "no competish" and Ignacio grins and hugs him instead of shaking him until his teeth rattle.

The date matchup is: Smart, a former model, loves her job... It's Wilhelmina, obviously. Extra points for the total creepiness of her dream date: a picnic in the park. With children. Daniel heads out and Betty tells him to do another button, so he starts undoing more buttons, and she's like, "The other way!" At some point Daniel became my favorite character. I just realized that. Weird. Kimmie comes around the corner looking glamorous and hot with like fake wind in her hair and a good song playing. She explains to Betty that Amanda took her to the closet and hair and makeup, and that she invited Amanda and Marc on their date. Cut to the three of them having lots and lots of fun while Betty gets harassed up front with the yucky cab driver, who explains to her that she is not part of their crew. They pull up to the club and Amanda randomly goes, "Oh my God we're totally here" in that psycho deadpan.

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Some unsubtle annoying woman who seems to think this is her big break from the Improv stage to character actress comes running full-tilt at Daniel on the boat of his date, shooting ticks and vocal mannerisms in all directions like a Stanislavsky laser show. Anyway, upshot is a date with a yellow coat and great legs, and he's all sexy at her, and she turns around with her Botoxed face and they both scream like girls, but silently and inside.

That "we still call them phones even though they do tricks" commercial with the guy sitting at the bar? Hate it. He's like the anti-Dyson, all lack of charisma and nothing interesting or spooky-sexy to say about his product. He just wants to Seinfeld it up about phones and how we should call them "devices." Device this! NI!

Daniel's like, "You mean picnic of children?" and Wili's all, "Six four with what, platforms and a fright wig?" Because you see, people aren't always entirely honest in their online profiles and often blur the lines between aspiration and reality in order to make themselves seem more desirable, short-circuiting their longer-term goal of actually fucking once it stops being the internet and starts being real life. That's why this is funny, I get it. Then

they're all, "No I must be the one who walks out on this date before you do" but the boat takes off.

Door guy tells Kimmie, improbably, that her +3 is actually a +2, so "pick your friends." Obviously Betty is going to be left out on the street like garbage, but that doesn't stop her from acting desperate and sad anyway. Marc's hair looks totally puffy but it's cute.

Auditions, where Justin prisses all over Bully Hottie, and then they have a dance-off that threatens to become pants-off, and I mean, if you like tweeners dancing intensely at each other then you might like this. And I will see you at *HSM3* on opening night.

The awful Improv lady bugs them a bit, and then Wili and Daniel talk about how she's horny and not even Marc can scratch that itch, despite giving it "the college try." That's so so sweet and so so creepy. She brings them oysters -- "an aphrodisiac, not that you'll need it," she tells the horny Wili -- and they ask for as much wine as humans can drink. This is excellent.

Perry Smith cries after the audition, because neither he nor Justin got it. Justin tries to make out with the Quarterback Queen, but he chooses Anger. For now.

Daniel tries to set off the fire alarms on the boat and Wili, awesomely, is like, "Explosives work better! We didn't plan ahead..." She joins him with hairspray, and the alarms go off. Awesome. "Okay okay okay," says Improv, and it's really funny actually, "Don't panic, this happens like every other cruise!" So many horrible dates! So many arsonists! That is my story in a nutshell! Daniel and Wili head back to shore, clinking glasses and proud of themselves.

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Just as pathetic Betty is finally hailing a cab (*forty-five* minutes after getting screwed, which is like five days in Loser Time), Kimmie runs out to chat with her. Betty points out that she is a dick, and not to pretend to be her friend. Kimmie's like -- get this -- "That's why I brought Amanda and Marc! So we can ditch them!" I don't even understand that one, but Betty buys it instantly. Anyway, she weaves a web of lies, or else believes the lies and is thus crazy insane, and they head off together arm-in-arm.

It's not the things that happen, it's the way they're happening. I mean, this is a fine plot and storyline, but it's like the actual scenes were written by an alien who has heard of "people" but doesn't understand that people do things for reasons, so it's just these characters we used to know, doing stupid shit for no reasons at all. I'm trying not to choose Anger here, but I just ... if you don't even like Betty, why would you watch a show called *Ugly Betty*? Betty Suarez was seriously my hero for a long time but last year broke it and somehow even choosing Betty did not fix her this year.

Of course, having escaped their date, Daniel and Wili go for a moonlit stroll through the city, turning their real date into a better kind of date. She informs him that his stupid clock is not actually ticking because two months with a twelve year old is not the same as having a baby. Word up. They talk about her fears and this new baby, and her need for a partner to create a family with. Daniel turns to work talk, and she points out that they worked well as a team setting the boat on fake fire, and they should trust each other more. He points out that this

is suicidal, and she knows that's valid. Then she walks into a strange apartment to fuck somebody she texted during the date. Daniel, of course, thinks this is the most adorable part. I agree.

Betty's totally hung over and sleeping in, and Daniel's freaked looking around for her, but Kimmie is there sabotaging her in a hundred ways. Basically, she talked Betty into sleeping in, got her drunk on Long Island Iced Teas, then got high-fived by Daniel for getting *Mode* into Page Six. Christina stokes the fires of anger, and then Betty finds them making fun of her high school yearbook.

Amanda points out that she's wearing the same outfit as in her Chess Club picture, and she protests that it was a rough morning. "Then? Or now?" asks Marc, sagely, and Kimmie talks about herself some more, then sends Betty to get her some water again just like before -- and there's a flashback for if you are dumb like Betty -- and Betty jumps Kimmie and pantses her, because she's an asshole. Marc's appalled face is particularly damning.

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Everybody's grossed out and Kimmie starts crying, all, "I thought we were friends," and Marc yells "Granny Pants!" at Betty, because her morals are suspect in his eyes. Then, randomly, she receives the text from Kimmie that she and Christina decided never existed, proving that Kimmie is ... I don't even know. I think Betty and Christina should spend less time together because they are both kind of tragic and when you put them together it's exponential. Like when the irresistible plot device meets the immovable dolt, what happens is that Betty does something shitty that makes no sense. She's just, like... Teri Hatcher now.

In the halls of the school, Dance Trade comes running up all flirting with a completely different personality and whatever, it's weird. I don't know what to do with a conversation that includes "jazz squares," whatever those are. Fumbling Politeness goes in for the dap, and Justin slaps it with his little hand, and Bully Stud realizes that he has just allied himself with the equivalent of a foreign exchange student. You know what, as great as it would be to just go there with Justin, because I love how everybody just knows and they don't have to talk about it, because it's more realistic in my experience than any huge drama-filled bitter Coming Out revolution, but I would like to see Hilda just be like, "This is not the boy for you" or something. However, having said that: what if Justin just had like an incredibly close non-gay friend and, I don't know, learned how to operate in the real world instead of this comfy gay cloudland where you have no social responsibility to meet people halfway? So like the kid could be the ambassador of normal and people wouldn't always be having to step in and make exceptions for Justin's bizarre behavior. Plus it's always so sad in Queens that like, if he fell in love with the kid and the kid turned out to be NI, then Justin would just cry and cry, and that would be funny but also serious and good, because I do love Justin and I love him most when he's more than yet more brightly colored gay set dressing, which is what he is most of the time.

Betty talks Daniel into making Kimmie the *Mode* buzzmaker, as her job, and asks about his date. Daniel had a good time, of course, but they aren't going to date of course. I wish they would. They have a big Editorial meeting, and Wili chooses Daniel's "Love Is A Battlefield" idea in front of everybody, apologizing for her puppy stuff. It's so weird that it makes Betty's stomach hurt, but I know she's got an evil plan. Then Daniel promotes Kimmie to Associate Editor, believably enough, and the whole room applauds her just like she wanted, and in case you're dumb like Betty, here's yet another flashback. Everybody climbs all over

her and acts ridiculous, and Betty gets all jealous and stuffs her feelings deep inside, then congratulates Kimmie, who barks out a coffee order and then gets hardcore on Betty:

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"I should thank you. But I won't. Because I'm popular, and popular people aren't nice to unpopular people. That's just the natural order of things. ...Still waiting on that coffee, Granny Pants."

The music and moralizing of this show would seem to suggest that Kimmie is the bad guy here. I'm not buying that. This is, again, a case of Betty tripping on her own bullshit. Kimmie's working for Kimmie, which is fine. Betty's working for ... I don't even know what. That same smug superiority that has come to define her and act as her downfall every episode this season. And this is the perfect example, because like: No, popular people aren't nice to unpopular people. That's the definition of the word. And, as usual, your response to that is completely your business. If you don't like being unpopular, fix it. If you get more out of feeling sorry for yourself and being the martyr victim of unpopularity, then that's what you're going to do. The bizarre arrogance and unentitled beliefs of superiority of dorks is one of the defining limits of our culture right now. But like, our behavior only ever descends from our priorities, and Betty's priority, apparently, is to railroad herself at a rate twice that of everybody else railroading her. Does *Ugly Betty* hate Ugly Betty too?

KILLING KIMMIE KEGAN

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 6 | Aired on 10.30.2008

Ugly Betty - Betty vanquishes [Kimmie](#) for the nonce with Marc and Amanda helping her to be evil, Cliff makes an appearance, and Daniel and Wilhelmina strike a balance -- but Daniel's got some tricks up his sleeve. Best episode of the season. *Betty's* back!

I *knew* once we lost the French kid the show would remember to be awesome again! What a fun episode. Bonus dorkiness? Hilda/Ignacio's storyline is all about the power of the people as expressed through the democratic process, *plus* introduces hopefully a new (unmarried!) civil servant cutie-pie for her post-Tony loving. Like, imagine the Henry of Hilda and you have Archie Rodriguez. I'm speaking unspoiled though, so we may never see him again. Hope we do. Also in this story: Justin wearing a humiliating Uncle Sam outfit, which is worth a thousand guffaws.

Okay, so "Associate Editor" Kimmie Keegan is ruling the school Regina George style, so hardcore that she manages to even piss off Marc and Amanda, who are usually drawn to that behavior like flies to shit. Meanwhile, she is also stomping all over Betty's dreams in such a way that it actually makes sense, rather than the plot device crap everybody's been up to of late. After getting screwed over on TV, in front of her family and Lloyd from *Fashion Buzz!*, Betty gets some hypocritical and -- in the universe of this show -- utterly wrong advice from Daniel about taking the high road. Enter Marc and Amanda, of course. (Dragging Cliff along for about five seconds of "anger eating" and upholstery shame, but seeing where Cliff and Marc have found themselves together deserves its own paragraph, because it is awesome.)

Betty resists Marc and Amanda's various murder plots and schemes to get Kimmie fired, but eventually gives in, sabotaging a photo shoot with Brazilian marblemouth and Rubik's Cube Mastermind Adriamalama Lima Dingdong. Awesomely, the sabotage involves telling Kimmie that Wilhelmina Slater only respects people who challenge her authority! Awesome, right? At the last second, of course, Betty gives in and tries to reverse her sabotage, only to have Kimmie accuse her of *now* oozing jealous, bitter ooze, and then laying a mind-blowingly beautiful amount of bitchy-glorious 'tude at Wili's door that ends in a frantically insane Kimmie getting bodily carried away, and Betty saving the day thanks to some sweet-natured advice from the always-wonderful Val Emmich across the hall, who is finally back.

But the coolest thing is the Daniel/Wili plot, which involves them rebelling together like siblings against Claire's very even-handed advice to get a new CFO -- apparently Alexis's best quality was her understanding of the bottom line, and *Mode* has become an endangered species. Wili bumps into the hottest Australian export since the Andamooka black opal, a well-respected publishing professional named Connor Owens. He's thinking of making a jump, but laughs off her offer to become the CFO citing historical personal issues with Daniel. Wili makes the offer and they take the meeting, but Daniel's become withdrawn and sullen... So she's all the more surprised when he's convinced by her logic to offer Connor the job, although he did just give Betty a whole speech about not being a dick. At the last second, Connor -- who turns Betty on even more than Cute Hallway Guy, and she's not alone in that -- drags Daniel aside to discuss the job offer... And they dap, because they are bros, and the whole thing was a *massive con to fuck with Wili*! This show is effing back.

Until our full weecap is posted on Monday, look back at [Betty's soapiest moments](#).

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Betty heads into work as she talks on the phone with Hilda, carrying a plate of jelly donuts for some reason. Hilda's all trying to get inside her head so she'll hate Kimmie Kegan even more than usual, because Hilda is, in this episode, completely disgusting. She talks about Kimmie putting a "steak knife" in Betty's back, and calls her something that "rhymes with bizatch." Sigh. Betty's like, "Um okay L'il Hilda, but I am no longer as of this moment a spineless naïve idiot." We shall see. Kimmie's sitting at Betty's desk getting a makeover due to her being the *Mode* Whore-On-The-Street/Associate Editor, and the stylist blow-dryers the powdered sugar from the donuts all over Betty's stupid clothes, and then Daniel shows up and they climb all over each other kissing his ass, as Kimmie reveals she's going to lunch with somebody from French *Vogue*. Betty counters with a call from Daniel's plumber, and Daniel high-fives Kimmie about her latest coup or whatever, and sends Betty to get them both breakfast, which Kimmie, of course, calls "brekky," because she is repulsive.

Betty drops the brekky on the table with a high amount of snottiness and Kimmie promises to let her know if she needs anything else. Betty points out that Kimmie can eat a dick, only she says it more like, "If you need anything else, you can get it yourself, because I work for Daniel." Kimmie points out her business cards in their beautiful shiny business card box, and how they say Associate Editor, and Betty, who in addition to being *fea* remains *débil de voluntad*, totally falls for her bullshit. Again. "Um, we have like a thousand Associate Editors?" To which the only response you could possibly give, Kimmie does: "And your fucking business card says what?" Nothing, because she has none, because in addition to

being the Meade family tennis ball and the entire building's whipping girl, she also self-sabotages like a motherfucker.

Kimmie illustrates their circumstances with a handy hand-graph: "Editor, assistant to editor. Editor, assistant. I have gotten higher in two weeks than you have in two years. Don't you pretty much think you'll be an assistant forever?" Yes. She will be. She will also be fat and ugly and have braces forever, because no matter how unlikely any of that would be in real life, it's the show. I mean how great would it be if the show was still called *Ugly Betty*, and all the late-night comedians were like, "Ugly my ass! No grapes, no nuts!" I feel like that might happen one day when this show becomes interesting again, because something that off-the-beam is what's required at this point. On the other hand, this is probably a better episode than most or all of last season, so I'm not bitching. Anyway, blah blah, Kimmie is totally right, Betty remembers that she forgot that she sucks, and then continues to suck by running off crying instead of punching Lindsay Lohan in the box.

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Claire summons Wili and Daniel to a meeting with some suit named Mort who tells them that they are massive financial straits yet again, and makes some weird joke about how publishing is like fashion: "You'd rather not see red." I know what "red" means in this context, but I'm confused by the implication that red is not a fashionable color. Maybe I just didn't get it. Wili doesn't even have time to get it, and rushes off to meet Tom Ford. Maybe he decided to put on some damn clothes for once, although I wouldn't complain if he didn't. Daniel also wants to leave, and they pull some very funny sibling non-rivalry games trying to get Claire off their back, but she's not having it. Claire tells them she'll be damned if they bring down a building with her name on it, and notes that while Alexis did have some occasional murderous impulses, at least she was good with numbers. They need a CFO -- badly. Wili calls Claire a "poor man's [Sally Field](#)", and Daniel giggles, so Claire sets loose the dogs of Mort: the way things are going, their magazine is dead in the water. This gives them pause.

Betty brings some fattening groceries home and Val Emmich appears with the fucked up hair he's rocking as Jesse the Neighbor, and he offers about a billion times to help her with the bags, and finally she lets him after he gets pushy. Betty asks if he's got his guitar strapped on for a "gig" and then wonders if she's using the words correctly, and he says the saddest phrase in the English language: "coffee shop open mic." They talk about how horrible those are, not that she knows ("open mic? Who's Mike? Am I using these words correctly?") and he asks after her "fast-paced life as a magazine editor." She of course suffers massive Kimmie-related PTSD and starts babbling about business cards, and they relate on the level of being lazy and not getting shit done and then wondering "what it takes to get noticed in this town." He calls her "Super B," which I like, and talks about how they are both dreamers or something (I kind of phase out when he's onscreen), and he tells her not to give in to doubt, and then starts singing a song at her about not giving up: "Go for it Betty/ No need to get sweaty/ I know that you're ready..." And it's just so weird that he's not famous already, no?

Kimmie tells some boring story to a thousand accumulated hangers-on, and Amanda and Marc attempt to kiss her ass, but she gives them the "busy busy let's talk later" brush-off, which rankles them. As Marc says, they are king and queen of this particular Prom, and Amanda worries about what happens when the masses get ideas -- Marie Antoinette reference on the hearth like Chekov's gun -- and says they need to keep an eye on her. You

know what song I like? Lindsay Lohan's song "Over." The video is a heartbreaker! But I really do like the song. I miss liking Lindsay Lohan so, so much and I was so into this comeback, but then she fucked it up again. I hope that she lives to become Jodie Foster but I'm willing to downgrade to Amanda Bearse if it keeps her alive.

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To the assembled sizzling hot editors, Wili and Daniel give a polished presentation of accolades for their pitches on the "Sizzling Hot" issue (Wili: "I only went blind with rage twice!") and they congratulate all the people and give specially sizzling props to Kimmie, who dazzles and sparkles, and meanwhile over in the corner Betty goes to her dark place and starts hearing that awful song Jesse the Neighbor made up only instead of believing in your dreams it starts being about asking for shit she has not earned. She follows Daniel down on the street and they literally have this exchange: "How come everybody has a spot in the 'Hot' issue?" Because they submitted ideas. "Why didn't I?" Um ... ?

Daniel laughs and wonders how he could possibly know that, and she says she didn't know -- despite the last three years of storylines involving her pitching ideas to everybody in the building including janitors and Claire's white-hot sizzling *Hot Flash* -- that she could pitch. He tells her to, and she crumbles, *natch*, and then points randomly at a fruit cart and starts babbling about sizzling hot fruit and how there's always a hot new food that increases brain power and reduces stress that you can just keep on your desk and pop in your mouth to keep your edge in this hypercompetitive world. The only fruit I can think of that fits that description is Marc St. James. She's finally reduced to just standing on the corner of the biggest city of the world screeching SIZZLING HOT FRUIT like a lunatic, but it's kind of amazing.

Ignacio, determined to be annoying at all costs until he finally fucking dies, runs around the house yakking about how he's voting for the first time, not counting *Dancing With The Stars* which he only did because he wants to get his nasty old-man mascara-wearing self all over Kristy Yamaguchi, which is horrendous. Hilda goes off about how excited she is about the election too, but not because of anything normal or awesome, just because the local polls are around the corner and she wants to market her beauty shop using flyers and the humiliation of her child. She says it'll be a really good day for Hildabeautility or whatever it's called, and Ignacio's like, "Also democracy!" And yes, my friend, they are going there.

The thing is that Hilda is probably the hardest character to write, because she's really intense and layered and exactly what life made her, which is strong as steel, more than a little crazy, and more than willing to administrate the lives of everyone around her because A) she can't handle her own life and B) she was the mother figure to an entire family for her whole life. And if you shade too far one way or the other, you end up with this shrieking bitchy cartoon harridan with occasionally tender moments, which is fine for the weirdos at *Mode* because they are white, but just comes off as racist posturing when it's Hilda. I mean, the reason Marc and Amanda are always awesome is that it's way easier to write for them, because they're easier characters. Just do the shit they always do, write fifty jokes and skim the best ten off, and salt and pepper with occasional soul. And the hateful way she's portrayed in this episode causes some fucking scary thoughts to occur, mostly having to do with how maybe the only reason this episode respects Wilhelmina -- the other hard bitch of the show -- enough to portray her as wonderfully layered and strong and vulnerable as she is in this episode is secretly because, even though we don't know it, she's getting it up the ass the entire time.

Betty runs in with a basket of fruit and Ignacio makes some stupid racist joke about it, and she screeches the words SIZZLING HOT FRUIT about sixty million more times and screams about how she's getting a quarter page with a picture, and then they all eat fruit. One is so five minutes ago, several are nasty, she says "kiwi" and Justin awesomely goes "kiwon't" and then Ignacio hops up and grabs some book he just happens to have about rare Brazilian fruits, okay, and Betty looks up this particular fruit on the internet and finds a wonderful surprise. Meanwhile, Hilda's like, "It's ugly!" and Ignacio pointlessly says that you have to look inside to find beauty sometimes, and also that the historically underrepresented Latino population in this country needs to get out there and vote so that their voices can be heard, and Hilda's like, "The tico berry is 'succulent and flavorful,' like me!" and Justin tells her to hurry up and get appropriate.

Daniel announces to the assembled editors that Betty has scored a giant coup for the Sizzling Hot issue, which is the sizzling hot tico berry which is also the sizzling hot favorite of sizzling hot Brazilian supermodel Adriana Lima. Kimmie feels some sizzling hot jealousy, and when Betty reads this fifteen-page monograph about all the ways Adriana Lima loves the sizzling hot tico berry and credits them for making her beautiful, Amanda jumps up. Amanda is wearing an awesome outfit that manages to combine Crucifix Madonna with like *Stargate*, by the way. So Betty tells her there are no tico berries in the sizzling hot cafeteria, and Amanda says it's for her less beautiful friend, and then Wili explains the real coup here, which is that Adriana has never done a cover for *Mode* before, but thanks to the sizzling hot Betty's sensational Googling skills, it's happening. Daniel gives Betty the whole shoot, making her PM on the cover, and Kimmie gets some sizzling hot diarrhea, and Wili goes, "That's initiative! Sometimes it comes in even the most unlikely brown packages." Which is sizzingly stupid. Daniel -- this is where it becomes ludicrous -- cuts Kimmie's sizzling hot club from the issue, because why would *Mode* be interested in setting trends as far as where to be seen, right, and Kimmie watches everybody congratulating Betty and gets a little crazier.

Wili's on the phone all "Marc the car is not here make it get here" and this entirely wicked hot masterpiece of a person approaches her and says he's an admirer, which she knows means he's either gay or a gossip, and he says no, he is a Connor Owens, formerly of some company I didn't catch because Australian talk sounds to me like the silverware of every kitchen on this planet going into a garbage disposal as big as the Ritz, and he starts talking about how you have to Market the Brand and Blue Ocean this and Tipping Point that, and she's like, "We are hemorrhaging money, please come be our CFO," and he says he can't because he has mysterious super-hateration with Daniel, which just makes her want him more, of course, and they are all flirty and sexy. She look really lovely this week.

Shizuki from *Fashion Buzz* arrives to interview them about the photo shoot coup and Daniel introduces him to Betty, which Shizuki loves because it's all "little person does good" and wants to interview her, as soon as they put her regrettable ass in a makeup chair. Later on, Betty's doing a perfectly fine job of putting on her makeup and looks pretty cute, but Kimmie bullies her into letting her put false eyelashes on Betty's face, which is already busier than a Wall Street boiler room on a good day, and then nice/bullies her into practicing her interview soundbites, which she of course memorizes because she's like a robot from the future of plot devices.

Betty runs off to tell her stupid family about the interview and Kimmie flirts with a grip so he'll turn the lights up to a bajillion and it's some kind of metaphor for sex. Meanwhile, Hilda's hanging up American crap all over the house because she doesn't Get It Yet, and tells Ignacio that he needs to put together an outfit for tomorrow so nobody sees him in his Crazy Old Man Pajamas, which made me laugh, and then they haul out Justin in his stupid puffy polyester Uncle Sam suit. He looks like a parade float. Ignacio, of course, thinks he looks great, because he has no discernment.

The Shizuki interview goes horribly, because while the fruit and the issue are sizzling hot, when you go on TV you really shouldn't be. Betty tries to keep it together while reeling off her totally boring Adriana Lima information, but she's sweating like a pig and sort of hallucinating and then one eyelash sort of crawls off her eyeball and down her face, and she finally runs away just as Shizuki's asking her if tico berries would be good in a Ticotini, and she is fashion roadkill, and Shizuki is like, "Oh, hell." But then Kimmie sits down and delivers all of Betty's soundbites looking, if I may, sizzling hot, and pimps herself to the camera for awhile, and Betty is freaking out some more, and then Wili and Daniel explain that they just remembered Betty sucks, so she will now be working with Kimmie on the shoot. Betty calls Kimmie out on being a betraying saboteuse, and Kimmie's like, "No. You don't have the face or the pores for TV, I don't care about you or winning anything, I just want to be in the spotlight and you are making that difficult because you are a freak, and in two days that shoot is happening either way, but I'm betting you're going to drive yourself right out of this job by then."

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Daniel gives Wili a very hardcore NO about Connor Owen as the CFO, and keeps cutting her off without even discussing it, which makes Wilhelmina sad because she thought they had figured out a way to make it work. He thinks about that and about doing what's right for Meade, supposedly, but honestly he's just thinking about how his hair is totally cute this week, having struck a balance between spiky and fluffy that is just right. Betty comes in yowling about how she can't work with Kimmie because she's a monster, and Daniel's all about the Tao of the Zen of the Deal and all, "Grasshopper, don't scratch her eyes out, do like I do with Wili: stay professional, fight fair, and take the high road so that your wishes can come true." That speech would not be any less awesome if it were genuine.

Marc and Amanda showily try to get in on Kimmie's boring lunchtime story about Xtina's baby, and she fully puts her purse on one chair and her feet on the other, and then cut from their gasps of horror to them walking in the city. Amanda's still in the giant cross, but my God, Marc: top hat, tail jacket, the whole thing. He looks like the cover of my Lytton Strachey book, it's amazing. He's like if the Penguin had an awesome gay baby with Catwoman. They talk about how they used to spread rumors, ruin lives, be pretty and mean, and now they are auf'd. Marc agrees that sometimes God gives with both hands, but that they need to think before going nuclear... Which of course is not their bag, because as they admit, they love going nuclear, and destruction, more than anything.

Betty's sitting all alone and pathetic on some random bench somewhere and they sit down, terrifyingly, on either side. Amanda describes Kimmie as "something that affects all of us, like global warning," and Marc explains the inconvenient truth is that Kimmie is evil and has to go. Betty asks what they mean by go, and Amanda immediately replies, "We need to kill her." Marc corrects that assumption and says they just want to get her fired. Betty worries about doing that, and Amanda's all, "Betty, she *threatened your family*." Marc,

again, explains that that's not true in any way, but that it's self-evident that she is a bitch. Betty agrees, but refuses to help her. Pouting, they vanish.

Wili shows off this green avalanche necklace which is a reproduction of a necklace of Marie Antoinette's, but I don't think *the* necklace, and wants to use it in the shoot. "It's just a suggestion," Wili says, which means if Betty doesn't use it she will never eat cake again. Adriana comes in and there is much ado and she says something about how she broke her finger beating up some girl, and I think Daniel of course fucked her in Milan, and she goes on and on for a billion years about the fucking tico berries, and it comes out that Kimmie met her at the airport last night and took her out for dinner and drinks. Because Kimmie kind of rules at this, if you hadn't noticed. Betty's like, "That's not FAIR! I could have done that but DIDN'T because I kind of SUCK! You are so MEAN!" Kimmie, no more interested than any adult ever would be, besides Neighbor Jesse I guess, takes off with "A-Lim" -- after the devastating revelation that she's replaced Cliff as the photographer, the bitch -- leaving Betty stewing in her sizzling hot inferiority: "Screw the high road," of course, "I'm in. Let's kill Kimmie."

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Silver Fox Ten Thousand Connor Owen hands Daniel some irritating spiel about how he went to Harvard but grew up poor in Sydney, yada yada, dad in jail, and Daniel sighs and fidgets and stares at the ceiling and asks, to Wili's horror, what his fucking point is. The point, Connor dreamily explains, is that he doesn't take a job for the money. When a client didn't like one of his campaigns, he didn't take no from "some VP Marketing who couldn't find his nuts with a GPS," but instead found the nuts of somebody higher on his own. He hands over his sexy new business plan and takes his leave. Daniel watches them flirt and he's all freaked out in his totally cute in grey and black striped sweater over a black polo collar. Wili is dazzled by the power of the Owen.

At the Betty apartment, Amanda is rolling out the end of her Kill Kimmie plan: "...It's an odorless, colorless gas. When Kimmie wakes up, she's got heroin stuffed in her pockets, and the police whisk her away..." Marc explains that prison is a touch too far, and then a voice like beautiful music issues from what is now almost a separate room: "She deserves whatever horrible punishment she gets!" Is it... IT IS! It's Cliff! For all of five seconds, supine and partially obscured by anger pizza, but there he is! Look! Look, it's Cliff! Betty complains to Marc that his boyfriend is getting cheese on her couch, which... Betty, come on. We both know your couch already smelled like sausage, or cheese, or whatever smell means sadness to you.

"Cliff. *Napkin*." That is like the most beautiful thing I've ever heard. I want to yell *napkin* at Cliff. That's it, I'm getting married. The great chase has finally ended, not in a bloody tragedy like I always suspected it would, but on a couch with some delicious pizza. That was easy. "Honey, I know you're upset, and anger-eating because you lost the Adriana shoot, but trust me. Kimmie will be dealt with." Now just pretend that this sort of conversation happens in every episode, and you won't ever miss Cliff again. Amanda asks if they still make guillotines, and Marc tells Betty that in fact, that is totally constructive. Turns out the Marie Antoinette necklace repro is up for auction, and if Wili can drive up the buying price, she'll get a cut. So if it's not around Adriana Lima's neck, Amanda realizes... "Someone will lose her head!" Betty shouts. And then everybody cuddles with Cliff on the couch because he had a hard day, the end.

Hilda's doing mad hot business calling people in and treating candidates like their wives are hairstyles and not respecting our national heritage and driving Ignacio mad with her disinterest in something he so recently won for himself, even though she's looking phenomenal in a shiny purple off-the-shoulder top, and OMG he *totally tells her that her vote counts and that in America you have to vote or else you're not really being an American*. My notes say, "That's actually what's happening." And honestly, I don't take citizenship or voting lightly and I'm slightly crazy about the law, and democracy, and optimistic and all that shit, but like: your vote is like your education, or your body, or your relationships. If you don't value them, fuck you, because that's nobody's problem but yours. Vote, don't vote, I don't care, but I want my future decided by people who care enough to vote, so it works out well for me. "You know what's American," Hilda says, just screaming into cartoonland at the speed of sound, "Making money!" She asks why she would even vote on that shit when it has nothing to do with her, meaning that Ralph Macchio** is about to arrive and demonstrate one of the many ways that democracy in action* touches us all.

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*(I can't decide whether to puke or cheer about all of this. It's condescending, but probably necessary, and I can't think of a better show to get this message across, since it's the only one on TV besides [Grey's](#) with a diverse enough cast to include substantial Latino characters in the first place, and *Grey's* is all rich people fucking anyway, so: I guess so. On the other hand, and more honestly and in a way that has nothing to do with politics: this is so retarded it's awesome.)

Marc and Amanda are kissing Kimmie's ass like whoa about the freaky fruity decorations for the shoot, which are like these giant floating pieces of dream fruit or something that are supposed to evoke Adriana Lima's childhood memories of sizzling hot tico berries, and Kimmie's dumbness crops up in a kind of funny, weird and not-so-believable way: "It's Surrealism. This thing Tom Cruise's daughter invented?" Marc goes after the necklace eventually, like, "Hate it! Did that giant fruit fall off Carmen Miranda's haaaaat?" Kimmie's a bit nervous, but looking great: her eyes look lovelier in this scene than maybe ever. Amanda and Marc spend some time naming berries, including the repugnant Halle Berry, and Amanda finally pulls the trigger: "This must be Betty's idea, because it *suuuucks*." Kimmie worries, and they turn the awesome force of their crazy eyes on her; she falls for it and runs over to the stylists all, "Get it off her neck! It's hurting my eyes!" Marc and Amanda give Betty the go-ahead: "We set her up, you knock her down." Betty wonders silently what will happen with her eyes bugging out, because she has no spine or independent thoughts anymore, because Meade has finally taken her spark and she is like the rest: dead inside.

** (Before you get excited, no, it's not the Marvel Comics editor from the '80s. I want to be clear on that: It's the other one. I know, I was excited too. But this one's cuter.)

In the limo on the way to the shoot, Wili offers to call Connor and turn him down, sadly, and the distracted and hilariously pissy and insolent Daniel offers to give him the bad news. "So. How'd you like to come run the business down at Meade? Great." He hangs up and Wilhelmina is surprised and touched. She thanks him for putting his ego aside and respecting her on this, and maybe you're smarter than me but I was kind of moved by all this, because Daniel Maturing has been a big theme on this show, but this season is all about bringing strong women down because we hate them, so that theme wins. Daniel sighs, grossed out, and stares out the window, and Wili's like "Damn."

Kimmie throws albacore at an assistant and sends her back to Nobu for real tuna, and Betty is all perky and twitchy and trying to help, but Kimmie's doing fine, so then Betty impressively maneuvers Kimmie by talking about how nervous she is about Wili's impending arrival, because she's not strong like Kimmie and can't stand up for herself, which sucks because *what Wilhelmina Slater likes is people with strong opinions that don't back down*. Kimmie blows her off, but Betty says she means it, that Wili only respects people that say no. "She's going to want to change ten things, but really she wants you to say no." Betty wishes aloud that she wasn't so weak, and... Did this episode just become awesome?

Totally weird music video jump-cutting brings Wili and Daniel to the shoot, where Betty is watching Kimmie work and wondering if her moral superiority -- her most irritating superpower! -- is worth destroying Kimmie. I would have said no, but you upped the ante when she fucked with Cliff, and I have lost my moral compass. Daniel's all, "I'm so proud of you, buddy! This business makes one wonder what kind of person you are, and what you will do to get ahead!" Because that's so like him. Betty runs off to barf and/or totally fuck up the entire plan.

Kimmie tells the diffident Betty to take a leap, but leap she will not. She follows Kimmie all around until finally Amanda freaks: "We must distract her! *Does anyone have a six-foot hoagie?*" Betty tells her a billion times that it was a setup, and Kimmie's like, "So I should be weak, is your advice? Fuck you, I'm going places." Betty begs her all over the place to fucking chill, but each protest just drives it higher. Right before Wili walks up, she goes, "Look, Betty. I know how to judge character, and right now you're oozing petty bitter jealous ooze. It's all over you!" And I mean, the girl's not wrong. There's just no ooze at this exact second that she's saying it. I kind of weep for Kimmie Kegan. There is no normal in her dojo.

Wili stomps up and goes, "Where's the fucking necklace." Kimmie tells her that the necklace is hideous and not going in the shoot, and *then* she goes, "Don't worry, babe: sit back, relax... Have a donut." Amanda and Marc *scream!* This is amazing? Wilhelmina pulls out her gun and she's all, "Butch, you got a death wish?" and Lindsay says her only wish is that Wili scooty-scoot-scoot and find someplace shady. Wili, unused to this behavior from mortals, is like, "Whoa, what if I actually do have to kill her? In front of everyone? Awkward..." So instead she just ignores that any of this is happening and tells her to get the motherfucking necklace and put it in the motherfucking pictures, and Betty appears out of nowhere with it, and Kimmie fully goes, "That's my decision, and that's final." "Well, you're fired," Wili says, obviously, and Kimmie fully goes, "Uh, no I'm *not* fired." I mean! And I mean, I know I bitch about things being unrealistic within the world of the show sometimes, but if Lindsay Lohan had actually vanished in a puff of smoke and a blast of light, you would not hear me complaining. That's how amazing.

But nothing gold can stay, Pony Boy, and so Wili's like, "Unfortunately, you are actually fired." Kimmie starts screaming about what about her blog and her vlog and her perfume and her fashion line and her follow-up to "Edge Of Seventeen" and "Over," and Amanda and Marc makes the loveliest innocent faces, and then Kimmie *snags the basket of tico berries and totally absconds with them!* This one scene is better than the whole season so far! She's like, "Zoinks!" and *Hamburglars* off with the fucking sizzling hot tico berries, like,

that's her response to the situation. Like Wili's going to say, "Nice and unexpected, Kegan. You can have Daniel's job now." Then she throws them in the lake and puts her arms akimbo and goes, "HA!" The security dudes show up to take her away and she screams like a total freak about how they can go screw and she is not gone because there are still two episodes of the six she was supposed to appear in that she is still appearing in, I think, having gotten her ass fired this week, and they watch the berries sink below the pond scum, and Wili smiles at Betty, like, "Um?" Man, if they throw Betty in the lake that is *it*. I will have found a new way to love this show.

There's a poster of Hilda on the wall at her salon, that Uncle Sam thing where he wants *you*, and this cute guy who it turns out is the Karate Kid Johnny Cade himself, all grown up, comes in for a haircut. He has a "work thing" later, which is actually the results of the election, because he's totally this district's councilman, which you knew was basically the deal when he walked in talking about how small businesses are good for the community, but Hilda? No. Not this week. He asks if it was hard getting licensed to operate it, since they're not in a business zone... I mean, this conversation goes on for awhile. Zoning... and such.

Anyway, he recommends that she get proper licensure and she tells him to suck on her licensure and he explains who he is, and she refuses to finish his haircut, because she's an unrecognizable asshole this week, and she's like, "Archie Rodriguez! I have six weeks booked! And you're saying I can't run my own salon!" Um, first of all: get your fucking license, you fucking freak. You're on the grid, start acting like it. And secondly, he's all "Democracy in action touches each one of us, because elective government is the only way that we can keep our elected officials, and our neighbors, from taking advantage of us. We are in the process of redefining what 'American' means. What side of that are you comfortable being on? With immigration hate speech on the rise and becoming a mainstream plank in some platforms, and armed civilian militias like the Minutemen looking to enforce racist ideals last seen a half-century ago, you are looking at an election in which a major part of the fight is about *you*, yourself and your family, and whether or not you even have the right to make yourself come true, or have the right to call yourself an American. And if you don't vote, I'm sorry, but you *don't* have that right. You're saying you don't want it, and you're proving anybody who ever accused you or your family of traitorous opportunism right." And then he takes a very deep breath and runs back to his dojo until she decides to start dating him.

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"Betty," Wili says, "Do something." That's nice. I wish she deserved that kind of trust this week. Betty hems and haws and whatever, has no good ideas, and Wili's like, "She's not like most supermodels, she is going to notice we're stalling," and over there Adriana Lima finishes off a Rubik's Cube and starts on the *NYTSunday* crossword and whatever is lame, and then Betty runs over to ask if she ate all the tico berries in her sizzling hot fruit basket, and they some interminable conversation that I don't understand became frankly Adriana Lima talks like her head has been run over by a Volvo, but whatever, Betty was the one that did the research and yes she has tico berries, and then they do the photo shoot. And yes, she's pretty. We get it. That's implied by "supermodel." Who the eff do you think is watching this show?

Daniel and Betty celebrate over the proofs from the shoot and he apologizes for not seeing what a bad seed Kimmie was, but in the end Betty realized that doing her usual subpar job is just as good as actually competing to succeed, plus easier, so it worked out. He gives her

business cards, okay, because that's how low her expectations are now, and then Connor arrives, and... Man, I've never seen Betty like... Her whole posture and everything changes, it's like she's going into *heat*. She goes kind of Amanda on him, all, "*Hiiii, my name is Betty Suarez, and I'm about to make your dreams come true, starting with ... ooh, your hands are so big and strong, your grip is sooo firm... you are like two tennis rackets ... with fingers ... firm-gripping tennis rackets ... that I want to fuck.*"

Dan snaps Betty out of it -- although again, can't blame her -- and takes off with him all tense and scary to have a "meeting" about the "job offer" and the second they're alone *they totally bro out and dap because it was all a lie the whole time!* THAT IS AWESOME. So now Daniel has a secret alliance with the CFO, whom both Betty and Wili find totally irresistible, and Wili thinks she's the one with the upper hand, so now everybody's just as crazy and scrabbly as always, but they all think they have the in, when really Connor Owen has the in, which makes him the best thing to happen to this show since Claire busted out the joint.

Betty comes home all excited about her ... business cards ... and Jesse claps her on the shoulder for going for her dream and she ducks her stupid-ass head all, "I only did it because you told me to" and he tells her she's cool, whatever. And as much as I would like for her to have an actual friend besides Daniel, I think you're leaving out the downtown hipster NYC thing, which is that *all* Jesses are dating Betties, it's the natural choice! Plastic-frame cat glasses, stupid effing hair, low self-esteem, spazzy rainbow socks, no social skills, no life goals, saying the weirdest fucking thing when you're merely trying to have a conversation with them, leg warmers and tights-as-pants, coming off like a virgin no matter how secretly dirty they are, daddy issues, always "in fashion" in some undefined way, and looking like they got dressed in an insane asylum by the people that live in the insane asylum using their own clothes and art projects. Face it, Jesse is the most realistic love interest she's ever had.

BETTY BOBS HER HAIR

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 7 | Aired on 11.06.2008

Crush'd - The world sets up Betty and Wili for a couple of hideously embarrassing crushes, but Betty's saved by new roommate Amanda, while as usual there's nobody to save Wili but herself. Oh, and Marc sluts around and then proposes to Cliff.

I rarely think about it when I give the A+, because I basically always give the A+, because I think quantifying art is, if not impossible, at the most subjective to a sort of horrifying degree. At what point do you go from "I liked it" to "it was good"? I don't trust myself to be accurate about that; I feel like it's enough to enjoy the ride they're putting me on as much as possible and getting as much out of it as I can. That way, the burden's on them. Having said that? Best episode in the last year and a half, possibly best altogether since the first season. A fucking Plus.

Betty, having noticed her lack of backbone and boyfriends, decides to stalk Cute Jesse across the hall. He's friendly and sweet, which can be hard when you've got all that Betty coming at you, but not to the point where he's actually upset when she breaks the insane news that this show just became awesome by moving Amanda in with Betty, and going six kinds of crazy bi-curious on her. Betty tries to ask him out on a few dates, each of which morph into a more horrible Pokemon version of themselves until she accidentally commits him to play this big *Mode* party... Which Mariah Carey is actually singing at. Oops!

Of course, Betty spends the entire episode wrapping herself in the velvet embrace of LIES, turning every buddy-buddy exchange into some deeply symbolic meaningful love gesture, but for the first time in I don't know how long, it feels less like Betty picked up Lyme disease on her intracontinental lesbian bicycle odyssey and more like... Sometimes that's just what a girl needs to get through the day: a functionally retarded guitarist with cute hair and no real shot at intimacy. I am seriously not judging on that one, for as many reasons as there are stars in the sky. (Or, you know, as there are indie bands in Austin, home of the sexually-confused, illiterate guitarists with cute hair. Represent!)

Amanda proves once again to be good at... whatever it is that she's good at, and creates massive buzz for a party on Betty's roof. She spends the entire time needling Betty, roommate-style, about her secret crush. Betty gives Jesse an amazing pep talk, signifying all that is good and right about Betty Suarez, and gives him the power not only to dedicate her a song he wrote about her, but also do a note-perfect rendition of that hot Val Emmich tune all the kids are bopping along to these days -- not to mention total Betty Suarez theme song -- "[Get On With It](#)," from *Little Dagers* which dropped back in May on Bluhammock, and you know I bought that shit so don't point fingers at me bitch, because this show and like [every television show](#) turned into a love letter to Emmich way before I showed up. Anyway, when Betty finds Amanda accidentally making out with Cute Jesse and wigs the fuck out, Amanda shows her very, very softest side, charming the pants off the universe and earning herself a few more episodes at Chez Suarez.

Meantime, ♥~♥Cliff♥~♥ asks Marc to move in, causing a total meltdown. Even Amanda tries to caution him against living with a fat-ass, and he finally gives just enough of a non-answer that it's an answer. Cliff is sad for like five seconds and doesn't return any of Marc's messages, it's like this horrible bloodbath. Then Marc feels so bad that he totally

goes on a short-term slut spiral with some ripped set dresser/gay porn-looking stud from Betty's building. Which is sort of hot...

Cliff comes back explaining that he should have known better than to expect anything BUT a total meltdown, so Marc guilt-reflexes right into a *proposal of gay marriage*. (Thank God this show's not being shot in California, right Henry?) Marc's hot feet immediately turn cold out from under him, which means more Cliff abuse to come, but mostly I have to say, of all the adorable Marc outfits this week, he gets minus one million for the string of pearls/tietack combo. The fuck is that? It's a perfectly healthy instinct to give Marc St. James a pearl necklace, but it's unnatural as shit for him to wear it in public.

Meanwhile, Daniel's crush on Connor Owen reaches insane new heights, meaning that Marc, Daniel and Betty all agree on the same thing for the first time, like, ever. Usually there's at least one tiebreaker! Connor flirts with like everybody on the planet, driving even Wili to get all man-crush about him, but once Daniel and Wili start edging into *Dynasty*-type bitch fights about him, he tells them both to stop being assholes, declares his allegiance to both of them and neither, and promises to do his job no matter how ridiculously they behave. He then puts a tiny little chink in the chilled vodka martini Wili's got instead of a heart, causing her to bond sweetly with Betty of all people.

Which means that Betty gets love from both Amanda and Wili, which always makes the episode, and although she doesn't have any sweet scenes with Claire this week, Daniel's heartfelt defense of Betty's beauty in the face of Jesse's betrayal is worth ten of those. It's always nice when people are ridiculously affectionate toward Betty; even better is seeing her deserve it again. Best of all? That feeling of affection toward Betty, her friends and the family she's creating around herself, and most of all: for the show that bears her name, and her unfortunate countenance. I can honestly say I'm excited for next week, which I haven't been since like the trip to Mexico a hundred years ago, and that's fucking awesome.

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Oh, Betty. So she's dressed like a lunatic, as usual, hopping around behind her window waiting for Cute Neighbor Jesse to come home from his actual real life that he's been having while she's been capering behind the curtains like a pensioner with a crush on the UPS guy, practicing her hellos, and finally grabs two coffees and beats it down the stairs so she can crazily fake laugh about how they're "always running into each other. LOL!" Is this a low point for Betty Suarez? The fact that you have to think for a second about that, like it's a real question with a quantifiable answer, is part of the problem with this season, but if you ignore the rest of this season, the happy answer is: Not even! It's just cute! She's been way more pathetic than this! You go, Glen Coco!

Neighbor Jesse calls her "Betty Rocker," which is so multitaskingly amazing I just now figured it out, a day later. He compares them to two ships that pass in the AM, and tells her that his night was so-so, ending with getting spit on by the cook. I would never spit on Neighbor Jesse, not even if he requested it in some kind of scenario. She forces him to take her stupid sad extra coffee and then totally blows her own spot about how she got it by accident but it's accidentally decaf because the coffee guy accidentally knows that Betty accidentally knows that Jesse sleeps in the morning because he's accidentally a slacker musician.

Jesse's like, "Oh, speaking of, thanks for reminding me that I'm the lead singer in a band, and thus have no concept of other people. I knocked on your door last night to give you this CD so you can tell me how great it is, because that's what other humans are actually for: listening to my CD, loving the shit out of it." And Betty's like, "I have played that role my entire life, future husband." Speaking of things Betty can do for Jesse, could she tell him her honest true thoughts on the CD and be brutal instead of being so nice. What Jesse is saying here, if you don't speak Hipster, is that a fun game for us to play is to pretend that we have humility and pretend that the other person has humility, but then totally love the shit out of the CD please. In a "brutal" fashion. Betty says she can only ever brutally love it to death like Lenny with a rabbit because his music is "so emotional," which actually does explain Neighbor Jesse's facial resemblance to that little bitch Chris Carrabba.

Anyway, "I Made Her Cry" is a song of Jesse's that made Betty cry, with brutal love. Is there anything else that Betty can do for Jesse? Why yes, yes there is. He wants to watch a Miles Davis documentary but doesn't have a TV, so he asks about the TV in the laundry room so she'll offer up even more of her dignity. Because luckily, Betty has a TV, and the loneliness that accompanies it, and if you give her five seconds she'll produce some kind of Hungry Man dinner or something to accompany it. Then Betty wanders off to work, the wrong way, and giggles and shivers and acts like a moron. Which would be embarrassing if Neighbor Jesse didn't immediately retreat to a pot-soaked fog of solipsistic considerations of his personal style and whatever the second she stopped yapping in his grill, dressed like a circus clown off her meds.

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Betty arrives early at *Mode*, I guess as a natural consequence of not having anything to do between the hours of five, when hipsters come home, and eight when luxury publishing begins. Also there is Amanda, brushing her teeth while running around the *Mode* offices completely ass naked, with hilarious props covering her bits a la *Austin Powers*, which would be lame and tragic except they're clever, like a desk lamp posing as an off-center miniskirt. Betty screams, "You're naked!" and Amanda stares her down, all, "And you're wearing a hideous ensemble, so?" She admits she was evicted, due to not paying the rent a couple of times and the inordinately nasty behavior this caused, and Betty's like, "You can't live here! And you have a hundred friends!" I'm so sure, she has like half of a friend. Come on.

Betty starts digging around in her purse to give Amanda some cash, and that was the moment I was like: We're back. That's the real Betty. And I realized that the problem has been Betty wanting things, which is why her being nice to Amanda and all the bullshit it causes is okay, because she knows for a fact that being nice to Amanda will have zero dividends, and can only lead to heartache and getting thrown down stairs. But the fact that she's doing it for no reason -- or as Amanda says, that caretaking is a disease for Betty -- means she can't be acting gullible, because there's nothing for her to get out of it, ever. Which is why the hell she ends up in this time is funny and touching, rather than being like this... lightning the gods are shooting at her ugly face. Anyway, Amanda blows her off and flashes her boobs at the security cam like she's got some kind of arrangement with the security guys, except she's still standing there where she was naked five seconds ago, and only flashing right now because Betty made her put on a dress one second ago, so it doesn't make a shitload of sense, but it's still awesome because Amanda is a lunatic.

Later, Betty's spazzing out to Neighbor Jesse's CD, singing along *hilariously* in the funniest, most Betty-esque Muppet voice, bouncing all over, and finally Daniel touches her shoulder,

causing her to scream "HI!" at him. "THIS IS MY FRIEND JESSE'S NEW SONG!" Daniel's like, "Did you not choose Me at the beginning of the season? Why are you getting all queer over this dude across the hall when it's been less than two months of Betty Suarez Land?" Which I can't even bullshit about right now, because it's fun to have a crush and get dramatic when you're 24, I get that. But mostly because Betty then changes the subject and informs Daniel that M.I.A.'s people called and she's in Brazil somewhere and they can't find her. Get it? That's like the most subtle joke ever on this show, and it's basically a pun, but I'm still quite proud of them. Anyway, they have to find a music act for their next stupid fashion non-event, which is going to create a lot of trouble for Betty, which is good, and then also, M.I.A. kind of ... is at the moment, but my theory is that Santogold murdered her and put her in a suitcase like S.W.F., which you must agree would explain an awful lot.

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Connor Owen walks in with donuts and Betty and Daniel both stare laserlike at him with their mouths watering, and Daniel starts writing Connor's name over and over on his Trapper Keeper and carving little hearts into his arm and Betty's like, "BTW, when Wili finds out about your sneaky bromance trick, she is going to kill us all," but Daniel's like, "I need people I can trust. And I can trust Connor to hold me tightly against his strong sinewy form and protect me from every nightmare creature that woman can magic up."

Betty, as a lifetime charter member and founder of Team Daniel, supports this. It's like this whole scene is liminal to the action, like, they're almost too distracted by Connor Owen to even say their lines, until Daniel breaks the spell by talking about how much pussy Connor got at Harvard, but like, I totally get why even Daniel can't concentrate on what's going on. It's like Rachel Maddow all over again, is how I think of this particular effect. Like, concentrating on what she's actually saying is a challenge because she's so adorable and awesome that it blinds your ears to what anybody is saying, and with Connor Owen it's his hotness that is blinding your sense of light and sound.

Which train I'm happy to ride, right up until we jump to the other side of the office, where Wilhelmina Slater is standing there hating on womenfolk for being so susceptible, which of course means she's still crushing on him like she has been, and anyway the new distracting thing is the literal string of pearls around Marc's neck, like... What in the fuck. I don't even have a thing to say about that. It's blinding my sense of humor. I don't even... Like, is that a... Are they trying... It looks sort of cute, but only in the extreme future sociology where "commenting on gender" is actually what you're doing, and not just saying really troubling things about your relationship to your own. And perhaps there are individuals in this world who have reached that place, and perhaps Marc St. James is one of them, but those individuals, until we reach them in the extreme future sociology, are crazy pants.

I collect old-school etiquette handbooks, specifically from the American Twenties to the Sixties and Regency London, and I've always loved this one quote that basically comes down to how being truly fashionable is a Goldilocks matter: being too avant-garde in your personal style is just as bad as being frumpy and old-fashioned. You gotta hit it just left of center, or else you're too far ahead, and looking like a fucking freak. And just as with anything else involving other people, the question becomes: "Does it really matter if you're right, if everybody hates you?" And just like everything once you've grown up sufficiently, the answer is simply: "No." So the pearls are actually wrong. I remember the clothes on this show being funny, but never super fucked up, and you would think Betty's clothes would be getting better, not worse. Hmm.

Anyway, Marc laughs at the women gathering all around Connor, although he admits he'd like to live in Connor's pants for about a year, and Wili calls them all fools. The only point of Connor, from Wili's perspective, is that he's an ally against Daniel. She then repeats that over and over to herself until she becomes weakened and dehydrated from insisting that it's true so hard, because it's a total lie and she's crushing even harder than Daniel Meade right now: "He'll always side with me against Daniel."

Boom! Connor totally sides with Daniel for about the hundredth time, and then goes on and on about whatever it is, and Wili's like, "Daniel is having a brilliant fucking day!" Connor tries to chill her out and she finally just fucking yells at him to find money for her ideas, and Connor's had about enough. He tells them about how he has this great relationship with Condé Nast and wants to sell a few of their titles over to them to open up their cashflow, and Wili's feeling that, but Daniel throws a fit because it's interfering with his father's legacy. Um, your father's "legacy" is a murderous bipolar daughter, a clueless playboy son falling head-over-heels into forty, a hardened ex-con of a wife, affairs with two different Brides of Satan, and a kidnapped sperm-popsicle baby now being fostered in the unwelcoming pickled Scottish womb of a near-moron, down in the fitting room. By no means should we damage that by selling off a couple of magazines, Rosebud. Wili screams and yells about nothing in particular while Daniel throws his little fit, and finally Connor's like maybe Daniel has a point and says he'll think about less drastic measures, and bounces because it's obvious Wili and Daniel are about to freak out. Unable to control himself, Daniel blabs to Wili about how Connor is his very specialist very bestest friend, and she got played, and then carves into the conference room table, "CO + DM 4 EVA" and runs off to buy Connor some little token of his admiration.

Betty rummages around in the saturated fats and processed sugars that constitute her refrigerator, pulling out both chips and dip, in case he's exactly who he is, or carrot sticks "in case he's that guy," which impulse would lead me less to indulge than to be like, "And a gun, in case he's a carrot stick guy." She's talking to Hilda, who looks more fabulous each week, and she's all, "If I put out candles that's romantic, but maybe it's too romantic for a date that doesn't exist that I can motherfucking guarantee you he doesn't remember you're having, or maybe I'm just the kind of girl that has a billion candles around, like, all the time." And... you kind of are, Betty. Don't hate.

"You are crushing hard!" Hilda says. The only truly unhealthy thing about Hilda's close relationship with the rapidly expanding beanpole that is her son is the way she says things like "crushing hard" without even warning you. Betty's like, "Yeah, but he will never date me, because who would." Hilda says Henry and Gio, like that's... Even Betty calls bullshit on that one, pointing out how Jesse is fabulous and vacant, and nobody's made any kind of agreement to pretend that Jesse's ugly, like the whole show did with Henry and his sick body, or that Gio is human size for that matter, so in the universe of the show yes, he is too hot for her.

Hilda, and I finally see what her problem is, mentions the CD: "If a guy needs you to tell him how great he is, he likes you!" HILDA! NO! That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard! How destructive and delusional, it's like that whole "gay is a phase" thing they tell you in middle school so you won't figure out how awesome kissing dudes is before they mess you up. It's a

lie that only causes you to go insane and waste time being sucky. If a guy needs you to tell him how great he is, *he is a guy*. That is all you have deduced: something you already knew.

Then Justin is awesome about, "Aunt Betty, it's not that I don't love what you're wearing right now -- it's very *you*? -- but maybe for tonight we can go a little simpler." She throws them both out of her apartment as they continue to chatter adorably, and then throws the good Justin clothes in the bathtub so she won't have to look at them and consider her own failures as a human being tasked with dressing herself, and then magical music starts to play. Betty stares at her insane hair in the mirror for awhile, perhaps wondering how come, and screams COMING! even though it's a one-room apartment and Jesse, um, knows that, then counts to whatever number means stupid and then opens the door. But it's not Jesse, it's something way better, which is Amanda in a crazy wild blue trench dress thing holding her dog and smiling freakishly and saying the Meade Building management kicked her out, "So I guess we're staying with you!"

I hope it stays this way forever and ever, like, to the degree that the second this started I got sad about how everything on this show only lasts three episodes, no matter how much of a big deal it seems like when it's happening. That's the key to this show. But this, I love. Amanda's like, "So romantic in here. You have a boy coming over? Okay, it's a boy, right? I need to know these things if we're going to be roomies..." Amanda, this whole speech time, has been taking off her clothes and you're realize she's wearing like everything she owns, which is the only way you can even compete with Betty Suarez in terms of layers.

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Betty's been shocked speechless since before the commercial break because if you're thinking it's a Jesse chocolate and you bite into it and it's Amanda instead, that's just Whitman fucking with your mind and it's going to freak you out guaranteed, but finally she pulls it together and explains that Amanda cannot stay in Betty's one-room apartment with her dying dog, because when she told her to stay with a friend, she meant that word in the usual way, not a secret atypical definition that means "punching bag," but Amanda only has one of those kind of friends, and it's Marc, whose friendship she would never want to jeopardize, plus Cliff (CLIFF) basically lives there, so...

Betty keeps trying to tell Amanda to fuck off and Amanda is not hearing her, and finally Amanda just throws down and says she only thought of it because Betty was so sweet this morning, and then for good measure hurls the chunk of Kryptonite at Betty's face: "You're Betty! You're nice!" BOOM! Betty knocks on Jesse's door to "cancel" their "date" -- which he absolutely cannot remember making, but covers well -- by explaining that a "friend of mine, or... *person* of mine..." is having hard times, which I love because that's exactly what Amanda is: a person of Betty's, and neither of them understand that yet.

Jesse's like, "It's fine that you're breaking the date I wasn't interested in having and don't remember planning with you, because my band lost a gig to another band called Buffalo Hump -- they SUCK! -- and so he's just sad. Betty mouths more meaningless platitudes of encouragement at him, and he's very touched because that's the only kind of conversation that appeals to him or that he can really understand, because he's Amanda only instead of "pretty" it's "talented," or like Betty only instead of "nice" it's "pretty." Amanda's insane voice rises to a scream across the hall: "We're out of diiiiip and I'm HOOOOOOOOOOOOOONGRY."

Daniel tries to climb Connor like a tree and Connor distracts him with a list of his ideas, which Daniel throws in the air like confetti at their gay wedding because he trusts Connor so much because of how they're in love that he doesn't even have to ask because Love Means Never Having To Ask Should I Do This Thing You Told Me Not To Do Behind Your Back, and Daniel and Connor raise their pilsners and bump their little fists. They are terrorists, but now we can see that terrorists feel love too. Wili's like, "This is why I voted for McCain, that little fistbump right there. I am so glad Connor and Daniel can no longer legally wed in the state of California, or else they totally would" and then sends Marc to research other ways of getting rid of Connor or blackmailing him, because she doesn't want to be constantly overruled by the Access of Hotties that has aligned against her, and Marc goes off to dig dirt with a fist bump proffered and rejected in favor of punching him in his little face.

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Betty's apartment has been redecorated in Urban Hobag, with pictures of Amanda and Halston and Marc cluttering each and every surface, including one with Marc in that insanely hot footman's outfit from last week, and in the middle is the hobag inspiration, Amanda, flouncing around madly in garters and fruity bra and panties. Amanda's so great because you always wonder, "What was happening right before we walked in?" She points at Betty's PJs, which are fruity in a different way and frumpy in a Betty way, and screams! "OMG WE TOTALLY MATCH!" She runs to Betty screaming about how they are going to have so much fun and then hugs her so hard she picks her up off the floor. Up. Off. The floor.

I always think of Betty as kind of like that little girl from *Tiny Toons* that wants to smother all of the animals and stuffed animals in the universe and sleep in a big bed with them, but actually if you think of Amanda that way it's like a billion times more terrifying. Short montage of Amanda pulling Halston's head out of Betty's lunch, then handing it over apologetically with Halston saliva all over it, and cut to Betty waking up with Amanda hovering over her with the cutest grey furry sleep mask, causing her to scream and then shoving her over and climbing in bed with her because she can't sleep. "Sometimes it helps if you tickle my back and tell me I'm pretty," she explains, and then presents her back to Betty for tickling. Man, Betty, if you don't think this the best thing that's ever happened to you, I feel like I don't even know you anymore. I realize Amanda's a bitch and dangerously insane, but she has the makings of a good citizen. I can sense it.

"You tickled her back? Weird," says Christina, or something. I don't really understand her when she talks. I don't speak Useless. Although she does get an awesome joke in about how she can identify with doing things you don't really want to do so you can get some sleep already, so I'm giving Christina a pass for this week. The whole conversation takes place in circles around this model Christina's pinning, which is somehow really funny too. Christina changes the subject to urge Betty to make an asshole of herself w/r/t taking her crush to the next level, so Amanda appears out of nowhere shouting about how she knew Betty had a crush going on, and she knows it's somebody in the building because Betty's "always darting in and out all sweaty and mysterious," and Betty tells her to back off. One of the coolest things about this episode is how Amanda spends the entire time trying to figure out Betty's crush but Betty's so into telling her to fuck off that she creates a horrible perfect storm disaster.

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Betty notices that Amanda's adorable one-piece sheath dress is actually made from her leggings, and Amanda's like, "I know, cute, right? And the other leg makes a matching scarf!" Christina approves, getting a big eye from Betty, and Betty runs away. Amanda follows them, all about "I know who your lover is!" Her next guess is "that troll in 3G" who walks his guinea pig on a leash: "When are you two crazy kids going out?" Betty still hasn't noticed that Amanda has now chosen her, so she blows it off again and says the guy doesn't even for sure like her, and Amanda's like, "Invite him to the *Mode* party!" Christina agrees, because if Betty's luck holds and she's just living in crazytown, it won't be awkward or cause him to break her heart because it won't even really be a date, and Amanda points out that it will also give him the option, should he turn out a serial killer, to find someone else to cut into pieces. "YA WELCOME!" she says, and bounces. Betty and Christina agree that this is the perfect low-risk way to take things to the next level.

Marc's looking delectable in a v-striped sweater with intensely big Jimmy Dean hair when Cliff jumps up from behind his computer screen. "Hey, Big Tiny!" Marc exclaims, which Cliff thinks is not as cute as Marc does, and Marc gives a speech about how after work they have to go to Prune because he's dying for a parsley and dandelion salad and if he doesn't get one, swear to Barbra, he will throw a fit with the fury of a thousand queens. Do people talk like this? Cliff is like, "Move in with me." Marc is thrown, because Marc has no idea what acting like a fruitcake does to those burly top photogs, and starts to wig out. Cliff shoots some *serious* puppydogs about how they're together all the time right so it just makes sense right right huh right? And Marc basically throws the table against the wall in the intensity of his flight. Marc, comes on. Cliff just watches the debris settle in the wake of Marc's instant egress like, "Girl, you are a mess."

Betty gets stalky again and ambushes Jesse, but then fucks it up with babbling about how the *Mode* party is for global warning, not *for*-for it because it's evil but for like awareness, and she has to find the band and blah blah and it's like a *Far Side* cartoon about What Dogs Hear because all Jesse heard in the babbling was the word "band," so his hands go insane in the air as he thanks her for inviting him to play this huge fashion party and not out on a date at all, which saved him from some dire fate he will now write into a song and then he runs off to squeal to his real friends, and says she's like a Snow Day, which is Christmas for slackers, and then Betty stares into space and wonders where she fucked this one up exactly.

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Betty informs Daniel proudly that she has found a way to fuck up their party but good -- Oh! *Fashion Heats Up* is the party, it's about Global Warning, I just figured that out, and I also just realized I've started typing "global warning" without even meaning to, which just proves how powerful Amanda really is -- and Daniel says they've got Mariah, because Connor knows her, because Connor is the coolest guy in the entire universe and when he kisses you it's like eating a cake baked by a rainbow, and Betty's like, "Let's put a pin in Mariah." Which sounds dangerous, considering where you put it, so I think this is one of those party games where you don't cover the eyes. She says Jesse's band -- Dark Sexual Journey, okay -- is "way fresher" than Mariah anyway. In the heightened universe of *Ugly Betty* I have to wonder what constitutes a dark sexual journey anyway, because it's either the tamest thing you've ever heard or else it's one of those things where you can't unsee it and it drastically alters the course of your life by how fucked up it is.

Betty swears that Jesse's band is this close to breaking, and Daniel punches some random buttons on his phone, awesomely, and pretends to call Mariah. "Hey, it's Daniel Meade! Hi! Turns out we don't need you, yeah... We got Jesse's band! From my assistant's building! Yeah, he is *so cute*. He's just *the dreamiest*." I love Daniel Meade. Betty runs away with a scowl instead of being like, "You wanna talk about a motherfucking man crush? Because God forbid we make gigantic decisions about this company's future based on how adorable somebody is."

Amanda and Marc take a turn around the place with her head on his shoulder as he's wiggling out about how he can't live with Cliff, it's such a huge step, sometimes he totally is in love with Cliff and other times he can't even believe that they're together. Cliff is so the new Henry, like we all have to pretend that he's not Grade A hottie so that he represents growth on Marc's part, and Amanda's like, "You are not horrible for freaking out about commitment, you're just scared, and also living with a fatass is really difficult." Heh. Marc's like, "Word!" She talks about how her live-in boyfriend Betty is always hogging the bed and making messes and borrowing clothes, and then Marc points out her adorably hypocritical outfit. Amanda preens. "It's Betty's blouse, I *totally* belted it." I love how Amanda never uses "totally" right, but more than that I love how Amanda can even turn the raw material of the hellish clothes in Betty's closet into cute stuff, but Betty still seems to think that looking repulsive constitutes a moral victory. Wili appears looking scary, and she and Marc stare Amanda out of the room before discussing how stupid women are for crushing on Connor while both admitting they also are crushing on Connor just like everybody, and Marc says he'll set up a meeting.

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Over street vendor shawarmas, Christina omits the part where the Dark Sexual Journey debacle is her fault, and tells Betty she has no choice but to tell the truth: "My dumb friend encouraged my futile crush, and then my roommate sidestepped about ten miles of my rudeness to create a perfect situation for us to spend time together, which I then fucked up by dorking out." She's pretty cute about it, though: "You should have seen his little face!" Yeah, I'm feeling that actually. When you're as incredibly sweet as Betty Suarez and myself, I'll be honest, that face of gratitude is like the finest grade of black tar heroin. I robbed my parents once, just so I could sweep in all Ty Pennington-style and refit their home in updated British Colonial, and don't you judge me. I fucking needed a hit.

Amanda appears, again out of nowhere, desperately trying to be a part of Betty's life no matter how classless Betty is determined to be: "Bring it! Who's gonna hate you?" Betty's like, "Fuck off. Why are you ... always around?" Amanda grins. "Betty, we're roomies now! This is what we do! I'm *supposed* to be all up in your biz. So why the brown face?" Betty looks for a second like she's thinking of making Amanda shawarma, because what? Christina busts out with the entire story, while Betty wigs at her, and Amanda's like, "So it's a musician!" Instead of fessing up, Betty goes, "Are you wearing my blouse?" Amanda tells her not to change the subject and says she should invite him to play at the afterparty. Once again, solving all the problems. Betty's like, "There isn't one?" And Amanda explains she's talking about the one she just invented, on the roof of their apartment building, which will also produce cash for her credit card bills, and then plinks Betty on the nose and disappears again, and Christina and Betty are like, "Actually, that's great. Maybe we should stop being assholes to Amanda and actually let her help."

Claire is totally stressing out because she is having *delirium tremens* and thus cannot pull it together to drink water out of a glass, so she bitches at Daniel for replacing their Fiji carbon footprint with glasses they have to fill themselves: "Why not put a hamster bottle in the corner and we can take turns sipping on it?" It's her delivery that saves it, because bottled water is just about as trashy at this point in history as prostitution or dealing cocaine, and she should know that, so this is a weird complaint in order to get us to the next plotpoint, which is that Connor is cutting costs. Claire says she recognizes the sorta gay gleam in his eye, and that he's always had a pattern of handing over all personal power to any boy in the room that he admires, just like when Alexis was Alex, and Daniel is like, "No, this is different because our love is real and whenever he looks at me I feel like I can believe in the stars again." She backs off a bit, but points out that her Wilhelmina stalking has provided the info that they're having secret meetings together, and maybe he should politely asks for his nuts back from Connor just long enough to figure out WTF that's about, and he screams "OUR LOVE IS REAL!" and stomps off, but he knows she's right, and mancrushes will always be his downfall.

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Betty's flyer for the rooftop party does look, as Amanda describes it, like something promoting a rodeo at a women's prison. It's got a rainbow flag background, with Betty's gigantic awesome face staring freakishly out at you and a cartoon bubble coming out the mouth with relevant details. Cut to Amanda's flyer, which is black with white lettering:

*the roof
friday
get on the list.*

Betty doesn't get it, like, they won't even know where or when it is, and Amanda patiently explains that if they want to get in bad enough, they will figure it out. If you make it hard to get on the list, the whole party is full of people who are desperate to be there, which means they will all act crazy and think they're having fun even when they're not. "Trust me... *roomie*," she says. She's got that funny voice she does sometimes that's like ten times more crazy than her regular voice, where she's like whisper-growling about inappropriate things, and I love it, and it gets a workout in this episode because everything she says to Betty ends with that. Like this intense, kind of sexual threat.

"Paris Is Burning" by Ladyhawke plays during the expected montage of people IMing and texting and phoning and whatever, all, "what is the roof?" and "who has the list?" and "what's the 411 on the roof?" but my two favorite conversations are, #1: "ru on the list?" and "bitch im always on the list" and #2: "can I b ur +1" with some totally nerdy guy going, "2 late!" Amanda sneaks up on Betty an hour later and shows her the guestlist, which is up to 300 already. Betty starts to realize that Amanda is awesome, but then immediately clamps down on that feeling, because once you stop feeling sorry for yourself you realize that Janis Ian is no better than Regina George, and the best thing we can do for ourselves in life is to be a cunt to nobody at all in this world, instead of feeling like any amount of mistreatment lets you off the hook for being a jerk yourself, and she's not there yet. This seems to be a theme with this show, and also *Stylista*, where it's like the point of the show: being a victim doesn't make your behavior anybody else's responsibility, so grow up and show some character.

Wili's got a headache trying to have her meeting with Connor, because life is so hard when you have to drink water out of a glass and there's no money for whatever photo shoot thing she wants to do, plus getting ready for the big party, and Connor works some of that Connor magic on her, massaging her headache away and suggesting they share some scotch. He says a girl like her's gotta have a '61 around somewhere, and she points at the cabinet: "'48." He says older is always better, and she distractedly says, "I wouldn't know, I've been the same age for years." He hands her the drink and tells her she's the reason he's there, because he wants to learn from her or something, and when their hands touch around the glass, "Let's Get It On" starts playing and Wili hallucinates that they are making out hardcore. She snaps out of it, ducks even touching the scotch, and tells him she just remembered her dinner plans. Good girl! No crushing on company time! Don't lose your focus! That's how Daniel got took! She runs away, telling him Marc will reschedule, and Connor's confused.

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Ignacio bitches at Betty about the size of the rooftop party, for which he's cooking, and Betty's like, "I know, I'm freaking out." He bitches about how she's going to so much trouble for a boy, and Hilda's like, "She likes him! I have done way worse things for affection!" Betty remembers for a second that she is not in a place where a boy is going to do her a lick of good, and Hilda starts naming off the things she's got going for her, like the apartment and her youth and the job. Justin offers that she's even wearing heels sometimes, thank God, and Betty switches whining to how she can't afford the party.

Justin says it doesn't have to be expensive, because he read in *Vanity Fair* one time about how cheap is the new chic. Which... "I heard about this trend one time" is not the most effective way to make your point, because that issue of *VF* could have come out during any of the three depressions the Bush family has handed us over the years, but not this one yet. Ignacio is like, "I'll make mole!" and Hilda fabulously says they should do sangria: "Cheap wine, old fruit, box of sugar? People get drunk, they don't care." She shoots a belated "drinking's bad" memo Justin's way, and he blows her off, yelling that they should have a South Of The Border theme. "Tacky Mexican stuff is so kitschy!" he says, and they all stare at him, because nobody knows if that's offensive to say, and he's like, "I can say that because it's my heritage." I guess so. Mostly it just sounds totally stupid and if I was confronted at a rooftop party by a South Of The Border theme, I would jump. Betty calls them a Snow Day, and says it's a good thing, because Jesse's dumbness is already infecting her.

Marc asks if Connor cried when Wili confronted him with the big folder of secrets Marc put together, and if Connor possibly is in need of a comforting hug, which is code language. Wili tells him to fuck off, stop asking questions, and do what she says. Marc is shocked. Connor comes in and she's all flirty about how her "door" is "always open" because she cannot help herself, and Connor asks how dinner was, confusing Marc. She's like, "Fun! Delightful! Thanks for asking!" Connor leaves to go sell everybody's ass down the river, and Marc's like, "You don't even *eat dinner*. You are a lying crush-haver! You haven't saluted anybody since Cheney! You have fallen to Connor like everyone else here!" Wili says she is not like those other women, ruled by emotion, and Marc delicately tries to explain that sometimes it's okay to "feel ... *something*" and she informs him that this is incorrect (this whole scene Marc is wearing a tie that says *lovelovelovelovelove*, wonderfully) and that ambition always wins over feelings, which is how she became Wilhelmina Slater, which is why she's awesome.

Marc tiptoes around to avoid Cliff, but it doesn't work, and Cliff is like, "Dude, three days we haven't talked, after a very important question?" Marc babbles about how with the nonstop blackmailing, backstabbing, and Pinkberry runs, he hasn't had time to take the curlers out of his hair. And I was wrong before, because Marc knows *exactly* what he's doing when he queens out like this, and the reason that I know that is that the next thing he does is literally turn his back on Cliff and ask if he's still got curlers back there, which is sort of bizarrely non sequitur, but also, come on, pretty genius at the same time. Cliff is not distracted, though, and flips Marc back around to ask what the effing problem is with even discussing the idea. Marc spazzes out about how moving in is like getting a kid, do you go Russian or Chinese or "stay local" and get something South American and what if it clashes with the furniture... Cliff tells him to forget it because that's his answer, and walks off. NO! Because that's not even the actual answer, because the actual answer is one more layer of BS behind that, which is that he's thought about it, hard and independently of discussing it with Cliff, and doesn't know how to have the conversation they're actually supposed to be having. Which is both better and worse than where Cliff left it, I guess, but makes Marc's position here a little more sympathetic.

Betty helps Daniel dress for the parties, and he's fretting about how Connor hasn't called him back because what if he's with some other playboy publishing scion and whoever that bitch is, Daniel's going to claw his eyes out, and plus he's technically Connor's boss so he deserves to know where he's been all day, and then his eyes fairly cross as he notes Betty's cute, inappropriate and crazy outfit, and reminds himself to calm down and not listen to his shitstirring mother who forced him to hire Connor in the first place, and focuses on Betty for a second. She thanks him for the donation to the South Of The Border party -- and once again we see Daniel indulging even Betty's most tragic concepts with all the love of a brother -- and he's like, "Well, it is the *Mode* afterparty, and besides, I heard the singer is to die for..." And again, Betty just makes that face and giggles instead of being like, "Yo, Kettle? Cram that shit because I'm nervous as it is."

The party, it is insanely kitschy. Everything is Christmas-lighty and piñata-tastic and there's like snowflake-cut menus hanging and Ignacio's worthless ass is wearing a big stupid sombrero, and like I don't even know. It's the Suarezes doing it, and I guess it's up to them, and maybe the semiotics of this are completely different because I live in Texas and that's a very different place from New York, but this just seems stupid and a little demeaning to me, even in the narrative context. Amanda's forcing people to hand over "crisp George Washingtons" at the door, in her scariest voice, and wearing a silvery kind of madness, and everybody's dancing including this one very intense young gay gentleman extra who somehow got on the list, and Hilda -- gorgeous as usual, and again rocking off-the-shoulder purple -- is harassing the sangria-drinkers like, "Mama owes the government!" and some hipster dude tries to borrow Ignacio's sombrero, probably just because anybody wearing a sombrero is automatically less troubling to look at than Ignacio Suarez wearing a sombrero, because WTF. Betty geeks out on Hilda about how an understudy from *Spamalot* used her bathroom, and Hilda tells her Jesse is downstairs looking so cute, so sad, so tortured. Barf.

Daniel admires his feet in those cute Manolos he bought to take his mind off Connor Owen, and he's like, "Sometimes people try and try to get you on the telephone, and they say the

number doesn't answer. I'm not just saying that to help myself; that really happens. You know that really happens, God. Oh, God, keep me away from that telephone. Keep me away. Let me still have just a little bit of pride. I think I'm going to need it, God. I think it will be all I'll have. Oh, what does pride matter, when I can't stand it if I don't talk to him? Pride like that is such a silly, shabby little thing. The real pride, the big pride, is in having no pride. I'm not saying that just because I want to call him. I am not. That's true, I know that's true. I will be big. I will be beyond little prides." And then he gets a message from Connor, and the sun comes out again. Claire's just pissed that she had to listen to Scarlett Johansson babble about climate change and Connor didn't, but before Daniel can get the info from his voicemail, Fashion Buzz tells them that Meade's selling off some titles per the orders of their new CFO, who met with Condé Nast for hours earlier. Daniel wigs out and as usual Claire's like, "Sorry everything you touch turns to shit, but only a little because I love your sister more."

Betty runs downstairs to comfort Jesse and her feet don't touch a step until she's standing there shaking like a Chihuahua in front of him and trying to hug him to death with her mind. He's like, "Oh, I forgot I'm a total poseur! My bad." She explains that he's awesome, and this is just stage fright, and that he's not a faker, he's totally awesome even if he can't feel it right this second, she can see it in there, and it's the bad thoughts that are fake, so he needs to get it together because once he's onstage he will remember that he is awesome, and everybody else will see what she sees. Which is a good speech, but even better because it works the principle of musicians to the utmost, which is that as long as you told them somebody would clap for them, they would climb over any amount of broken glass and stage fright, because all art is ego. Jesse is like totally sweet and grateful, and they breathe -- Betty gives a little "woo!" -- and he tells her she's so beautiful, and takes off upstairs.

And because she wasn't around for the beautiful nachos he had for breakfast -- or the beautiful episode of *Tyra* he watched when he woke up, or the beautiful vegetarian samosas some other beautiful girl just like Betty brought him earlier that beautiful evening, or the beautiful Japanese kicks he customized and bought online an hour ago, or the beautiful and courageous mullet of the girl at the copy shop yesterday when he was printing out the beautiful liner notes of his self-produced album -- this causes her to go completely retarded.

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Jesse does a fairly decent job of performing Val Emmich's "Get On With It," a fabulous song and the lyrics of which Betty's apparently immune, and Betty's like, "So amazing! Especially now that we are in love!" Justin doesn't even have time to deal with Betty's crap, though, because he just spotted Ivanka Trump putting a burger in her purse, so he needs to notify [Gossip Girl](#) stat, and Betty's left with nobody to spooge all over about Jesse, Jesse, Jesse.

Marc's standing around panicked with his phone, and Amanda creeps up to guess that Betty's crush -- still fixating on it, note, because she's digging Betty right now which is all we have -- is the horrible old man in the sombrero. Marc's like, "A) That's her dad, and B) Me talk now." He complains about how Cliff won't call him back because somewhere in that mountain of flesh there's a broken heart that thinks Marc doesn't want to move in, but it's like, things are so good and he's so in love with Cliff right this second. Everybody's lives and hair products are in their rightful places, and everybody looks good, so this is like an attack on things, like a War on Happiness, and Amanda plays devil's advocate for a second before

she spots cake and runs away without offering a word of advice. Marc drinks his beer sadly, really kind of broken up about it, and then spots this set dresser who sounds Australian and has intense pectorals that Michael Urie thinks is hot in real life even though he's pretty clonelike, and they start flirting. And as we learned from the Lesser [Queer As Folk](#), whenever two men look into each other's eyes for more than half of one second, sodomy is the automatic result. CLIFF! GET YOUR HOT ASS UP HERE!

Jesse dedicates a song ("Snowy Day") to a girl who is "just really special." Jesse kind of makes me want to vomit tonight, even though he's still rocking that awesome camouflage guitar strap. Betty's all, "Hope it's me!" The lyrics are pretty standard, leading up to how this girl the Snow Day in Question made him feel like he was just working too hard at being a slacker musician and helped him remember the important things in life, such as beautiful nachos. Betty basically shits herself, of course. Hilda screams and squeals and helps Betty build preposterous castles in the clouds for awhile, and Betty -- oh, girl -- tells her about how he called her beautiful, and I mean, that's really when it turns into *Saving Private Ryan*, because we have a man down. Man down, do you copy? Somebody needs to ... not burst her balloon, but maybe slip her a mickey? Anyway, Hilda is no longer in the balloon-bursting business, so she holds Betty's hands and they breathe together for a second, awesomely, before Betty launches herself at shame once again.

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Justin says what's up to Wili, but she is not feeling him, and then finds out that she's accidentally partying on Betty's roof, which makes her feel ill. She spots Connor just as Daniel, on the other side again like at the beginning of the episode, sees him too, and they converge on him like squabbling children for a good long while until he explains that they are assholes who can go ahead and fuck off, because he's not going to pick sides. He sold the magazines because Daniel took the muzzle off, he got together with Wili because he wants to work with them, and any kind of blackmail bullshit she's got up her sleeves means nothing to him, because after he nearly went down the Martha Stewart hole he decided to become the kind of man that he -- and apparently everybody else -- could love, so excuse him, but he's nobody's bitch, and he plans on doing the job he was hired to do, not fuck around with sperm-stealing weirdos and bromance douche-chills. After he's gone, Wili and Daniel have orgasms of such intensity that they have to hold each other up so they don't get Betty's roof on their clothes.

Betty goes to Jesse's apartment to embarrass herself, but he's not there; there's girlish giggling -- plus Amanda giggling too -- coming from Betty's apartment, and you'll never guess who's macking in there. Betty runs off and Amanda follows her, yelling about how it was obviously bound to happen because she's a ho, so next time she'll hang an oh-so-discreet bra on the doorknob, and Betty screams loud like a monster, "You are the worst roommate! You are selfish and insensitive! I want you out! Be gone by tomorrow!" Which is... what inevitably happens when ugly girls get hot roommates, and frankly at 24 you should know that. But what makes it amazing is Amanda's face, which bears the saddest face a face has ever saddled. OMG, Amanda, that is rough! You can't be my roommate either, because you are a hot mess, but I do feel terrible for you right now.

Wili approaches Connor, awkwardly apologizing: "I always backmail people when I'm nervous," she explains, and he smiles all hot. She says it's counterintuitive to meet actual nice people with integrity in business, so she didn't know what to do, which is fairly awesome. She asks if they can start with a clean slate, and he's like, "Great. As long as I

don't have to bump knuckles with Daniel anymore, because that is weird." She smiles and flirts about how they still have to try the scotch, and he says it's a date, and she's so happy! That something horrible must happen! His phone rings and he's like, "Dang, it's my fiancée and I have to go talk to her, later buddy," and her nod is very eloquent after he's gone, because this is exactly what she was saying would happen, and she fell for the universe's trick anyway. Everybody is getting eponymously crush'd! Cliff! And Amanda! And Wilhelmina and Daniel! And of course Betty! But if they all get crush'd then *who will be left to be awesome?*

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Marc, apparently, who tells the random anonymous sex guy that his name is Hunter Farthington, which is exactly what you should do when you've just got boned by somebody who would live in the same building as Betty Suarez and Neighbor Jesse, because even if you don't know what the problem is yet, assume there's a problem. Real estate is the new zodiac. Marc adjusts his clothes and feels horrible for a second, and then Cliff comes running up all adorable, because he "wasn't avoiding" Marc, he "just happened to get all twenty messages" just now.

And let me tell you that this also is a lie, because really it involved a lot of staring at the phone as the messages piled up and drinking a beer and leaving the phone around the house so it's not staring at you all the time and eventually going out the house altogether for awhile, and then coming home having forgotten about just the necessary amount of angry that is keeping you from listening to the messages, so you listen to just one, just in case it's not about that or it's an emergency or something, and then there's smiling and one more message, and then twenty messages later you have completely forgotten to be mad, and then comes the running, and the sweating, and the jumping around the entire building looking for Marc, and here he is.

"Sweetie, I'm sorry. I should have known asking you to move in would cause a meltdown. You're a neurotic mess! And I love that about you..." The sex guy from a second ago comes out of his apartment to go be a part of the horrible Betty party, and Marc feels yucky, and Cliff's like, "All that matters is that we love each other," and the guy is all flirty and refractory at Marc, who panics and proposes marriage to Cliff, who's just standing there sighing (or wheezing!) and Cliff's like, "What?" And Marc jumps in his arms and says he wants to be with Cliff forever, and Cliff is the happiest boy in the world, and on the other end of the hug it looks like Marc just saw the scariest thing.

Daniel comes out of the building and sees what's left of Betty sitting on the curb like garbage feeling stupid again, but that's so natural for her he doesn't even notice it, and is all about crying about how he made a fool of himself with Connor and fucked it up bigtime, and then I must admit Betty got me a little bit in this scene. "Pretty sure I'm a bigger fool," she says, and then with the saddest, most embarrassed face: "I threw him a *party*," like she just can't stop thinking of all the ways this was mortifying.

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Daniel asks if she's crying, and she really is. "I was so stupid to think that he would like me. Of course he picked Amanda!" She explains about the kissing, and how she should've known better than to assume that he meant beautiful on the outside, where she isn't. Daniel tells her she is beautiful, and then she gets even sadder and says that she's fine with

who she is, but that beautiful is not one of the things. She is totally breaking down, you guys! That's so rough! Daniel explains that men are stupid and "go for the obvious," and like even Daniel does it, when he should know better, which: it's adorable that he thinks he knows better. He then reminds her that when you're 24 you are allowed to be totally stupid and have crushes left and right and cause all the drama you've got energy for, and also that she is so beautiful, and then he holds onto her so tight and feels so bad about how other guys are just like him, and well, this episode is perfect. And not even over.

Betty's cleaning up inside the apartment and Amanda comes out in her sparkly outfit with a bag, really sad, and you can tell she's been crying, and Betty won't look at her, and she gives her all the money she made at the party, toward paying Betty's rent, and Betty keeps ignoring her, and Amanda walks around behind her and is amazing. "Hey, so remember that guy I was kissing earlier? I don't think you know him... Anyway, I'm so over him! I was talking to him, and it turns out he's kind of stupid. Yes, he's the kind of guy a girl would totally fall for, but..." She stares at Betty: "He is so not worth it." Betty's shoulders relax, and Amanda's so serious: "Betty, I had no idea." Betty tells her she's not the worst roommate ever, which Amanda is intensely grateful to hear, and offers her more time. Amanda is so happy! She's glowing! This show remembered to be awesome!

"Betty, you're lucky. When somebody falls in love with you, it's real. I never had that. I never know if I'm loved for who I am, or because ... I'm *so pretty*." Ha! Now it's just like showing off, zooming into the cliché and then pulling out again like a barnstormer. Betty's like, "Fucking seriously, you nutsack. Clean up in here." They stare at each other for about a million years and then Betty heads upstairs to clean the roof, and Amanda watches her go with this like intense look of love. I've always liked how Marc and Amanda would never under any circumstances admit to how much they totally adore Betty, or how the little détentes always fall apart immediately, but I don't guess there's really a reason it has to stay that way, any more than Betty really has a reason to be hideous at this point.

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One more, just for fun: Betty's cleaning on the rooftop and spots a dark frightening figure looking out over the city: it's Wilhelmina Slater, watching the sunrise. Betty stands very still for a moment and then tries to get away. "Betty. Have a seat." She points at the picnic table next to her, and Betty nervously sits down, and "Look" by Sebastien Tellier starts all amazingly, and Wili hands her a beer without looking at her, and Betty takes a drink and hands it back, and they look out at the city together. What a fucking perfect episode.

YOU'RE NOT THE ONE FOR ME, FATTY

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 8 | Aired on 11.13.2008

Tornado Girl - Marc fesses up, Claire dresses up, Daniel messes up, and Wili moves everybody around as though they are pawns in some kind of board game you might play with a smarty-pants.

Connor has ushered the heads of the company and the various magazines off to a woodland corporate retreat, but the scenes there are refreshingly free of the usual ropes-course/trust-fall clichés. They are not free of crazy, however: Claire Meade spends the second day of the retreat dressed as Tim Burton's brain, and nobody even notices. Wili and Daniel have left the final look at this month's issue to Betty, and just after she's approved it -- and its "fashion tornado" cover shoot -- a real actual (non-fashion) tornado rips through Kansas, killing like a billion people. PR nightmare, Peter Parker!

So Betty and Marc set out in search of Daniel and Wili to recall the issue before it goes out -- and Amanda comes along, because what is the point of this show otherwise -- in Cliff's car. Stressing about his upcoming gay marriage issue, he crashes into a tree on the way to the retreat lodge. One thing you might not know is that between the island and upstate, there's a place called Arkansas where the people all wear bib overalls and chew on hay while drunk-driving, it's a whole mess. Anyway, Betty finally hires a skywriter and gets Daniel to call her, but he and Wili make a last-minute publicity-stunt decision and send the issue out anyhow.

Betty ends up on *Fashion Buzz* once again, this time as the classless harebrained assistant who luxuriates in the pain of dead trailer trash, the titular "Tornado Girl," and for five seconds she's as T-shirt famous as when Winona had (as Justin puts it) her "troubles." There is a heartrending scene in which Betty fully breaks down in Daniel's office and seriously explains to him just how horrible he's treated her this time. He responds by apologizing at a press conference, taking all the blame onto himself, and selling the issue as a limited-time offer, all proceeds going to help the victims. Awesome.

Hilda continues to be really confused about basic municipal shit, and can't understand why they turned down her beauty shop permit. She and Betty go visit Karate Cutie Archie Rodriguez, for reasons that aren't really very comprehensible, and basically consist of screaming at him in the middle of his office for awhile and then wandering away like freaks, even though A) none of this has anything to do with him and B) he's not in charge of beauty shop permits and most importantly of all, he can't even pronounce the word "permit." He keeps saying *perMIT*, like, just to drive you fucking nuts, and nobody else does, which is tight of them. Anyway, because Hilda is gorgeous and needs to go out with Archie, they just ignore the entire lame plot that got them there and he shows up schlepping this box of, like, candles and saying that Hilda's Beauticles or whatever it is can get a permit by becoming a boutique. Meanwhile, Justin is turning into something amazing you've never seen before, like this... cross between Rihanna and David Sedaris's Mom.

You know what's stupid? They're remaking *Karate Kid*. Even though it's just like common knowledge that the franchise hit its apex in 1994 with *The Next Karate Kid*, specifically the part where Michael Cavalieri goes, "You said you had all the answers, Colonel. You were wrong." Or when they invent the pink belt so Hilary Swank will look more like a girl and less like a big old giant man.

But now what about the actual main characters, you ask. Amanda's main plotline is dressing Betty at the beginning of the episode basically, but it carries a lot of weight because Betty looks fucking awesome the entire time. Still busy and kind of insane, but not a hot mess like normal. It's like she has a personal style or something. I applaud this. Either that, or Claire Meade's crazy outfit sucked all the crazy out of everybody's outfits, except for this weird Mondrian necklace Marc is sporting.

Other things Marc's sporting include his cutest hair *ever*, Betty's admiration for telling her about the Daniel betrayal in an adorable noir fashion, and the total shame of having cheated on Cliff. Oh, and Amanda finds a Tiffany's receipt for their rings, which causes him to go on a serious downward spiral. Proving that you should never trust a Suarez, he takes Betty's advice and comes clean about all of it, breaking my poor Cliff's heart to a possibly unfixable degree. And you know, normally I would be stomping mad about this development, but: *cutest hair ever*. Now if you'll excuse me, I believe I've something in my eye.

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Betty and Amanda walk to work, Betty excitedly chattering about the new *Mode* issue, themed "Eye Of The Fashion Storm." Amanda, noting Betty as having the look of someone with a handle on science, asks why tornados always hit "shantytowns"; she offers the possibility that God just hates poor people. Betty's not feeling that, and changes the subject back to the eye of the fashion storm, particularly the one she's in the center of: a cute T-shirt with a pink skull, high-waisted herringbone pattern skirt, a cool Chanelesque midlength jacket, a funny '30s hat, and white gloves. She looks awesome, and not in the "awesomely fucked-up" way of late, but actually like the cute girl she could be. Amanda calls her a "plus-size princess" and says dressing Betty up in the clothes from Amanda's "hefty years" is like playing dressup with a big squishy doll. She fawns all over Betty and begs to do it every day. Say yes! Amanda looks about sixteen feet tall in a big faux-fur coat and ruffly headmistress dress with puffed sleeves. Marilla Cuthbert wouldn't be impressed, of course, but [Blair Waldorf](#) would approve.

Betty, as usual, reacts negatively to the idea of dressing like an actual person and not the nightmares of clowns, and changes the subject to the big Meade retreat at Talmadge Hall. She paints a word-Bosch about some horrific doings in the woods such as "sharing ideas" and telling "anecdotes," and Amanda correctly identifies this as being fantastic in an amount equal to having a scorching herpes outbreak. Betty's phone rings and she hands Amanda her bagel, which promptly goes in the trash ("It's for ya own good!" Amanda shouts hilariously), and answers her phone. Whatever it is, it's bad news, but it also makes her smile so big you can smell the lox in her braces.

Betty runs into Daniel's office and says that the issue's final approval has to be pushed back, because there's been a problem at the printer's. Daniel is crestfallen like a boy in love, because that means he won't get to ride in Connor's awesome car and have awesome Connor adventures and be in the "fun car." You know what the "fun car" is? Whatever Claire's doing. That broad is always ten times weirder when she's bored. Betty offers to do it, in a rehearsed way, and Daniel kind of blows her off because it's a huge deal, but she assures him that, having watched him do it a billion times, she's in control. He admits she is sort of terrifyingly OCD -- she prefers "helpful," which is one word for what she is -- and he tells her to go for it, which of course engenders a total whooping freakout.

Wilhelmina's wearing a huge white fur and red dress, and spots Connor when the elevator doors open. She tries to close the doors on him, but she's too late, and they ride together with a wolf prowling the background on the video screen. He asks about the retreat and she tells him, again correctly, that this is an exercise for people too dumb to get out of it, and he orders her to come. When she reminds him that he's her employee, he drops to one improbable knee and kisses her hand, telling her that her brand of leadership is exactly what they need. Wili feels the pangs of emotion or whatever, and it causes her to walk kind of crooked.

Marc's looking adorable in a cute sweater vest, sweet Peter Pan collar, bizarre complicated necklace like something from a forgotten metalworking civilization, and straightened emo hair that makes him look older and younger at once. Amanda descends on him like a crazy Valkyrie ("So, Bridezilla...") and starts nattering about the big gay guilt wedding. He changes the subject to her hair, producing a tiny curling iron and telling her she's frizzy. She looks totally amazing with bright red lips and hair piled up to compliment the naughty librarian thing she's working, but she sits obediently. She realizes he's changing the subject, and catches us up on how he's all gay and stuff, and he changes the subject again to what games they'll play while the bosses are gone. His first choice? Making the temps kiss each other. God I love Marc and Amanda. Why didn't we ever think of that?

Amanda asks if Marc's punishing her for her stance on gay marriage, which she corrects saying she only disapproves in the case of unattractive gays, and besides, unattractive Cliff is growing on her. This makes Marc's stomach hurt, of course, due to his slut spiral and panic proposal last week, but luckily he's saved by a summons from Wili. Breezing into her office, he's shocked into a scream by the large gun pointed at his head, and hides behind a sheer curtain. She doesn't drop her weapon, awesomely, and keeps it pointed at Marc's pretty little head while she complains about the enraging Connor: "He's so self-confident! He won't listen! And he's not afraid of me!" Marc automatically says he's afraid of her, and she snorts that she doesn't need a gun for Marc. "Five little words and I could make you pee your pants." I want to know those words! She is magic!

Marc asks if Connor's still getting under her skin, and she whines and stretches out on a chaise, with Marc on the rug beside her like a setter, and starts talking about how Connor has that unknown fiancée: no doubt twentysomething, fabulous, European and thin. Marc immediately says Wili's all of those things, even though that doesn't make sense, and offers to get her a room on the opposite side of the lodge. "Thank God it's hunting season," Wili muses: "If I can't be with the man I want, at least I can kill something." Dude, that is *exactly* what my last week has been like, you have no idea.

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Betty spends about a thousand years checking every page of a copy from the press, whiffing the pages past her face and smelling it and pissing the teamsters off. She starts in about how the binding adhesive has a smell and might overpower the perfume samples, and the main guy Phil is like, "Oh shit! Well, I'll destroy all of these magazines and then invent an odorless adhesive, how's that." (Um, not as hard as you're making it sound? Like, ordinarily when you make glue, first you need to thermoset your resin, and then after it cools you have to mix in an epoxide -- which is really just a fancy-schmancy name for any simple oxygenated adhesive, right? -- but if you raise the viscosity by adding a complex glucose derivative during the emulsification process, you're golden. Come on, Phil.) Betty

asks him to take a picture of her dorking around, and he won't, so she takes the shot herself: "Eye Of The Fashion Storm, first *Mode* issues approved by me!" Say cheesy!

Connor gives a short speech to the assembled magazine guys about how magazines are in trouble and they all need to go walking through the woods and come up with bold ideas so their magazines don't get shut down. Claire, watching Wili play with her phone, clears her throat: "May I offer a crazy suggestion right now?" We wouldn't have it any other way, babe. She tells him to take away everybody's cells and PDAs, and they love it. Wili almost has a heart attack, and Claire's still smirking long after Wili's offered to go Cheney on her ass in the woods.

Everybody's hanging out at Amanda's desk when Betty comes back babbling about the issue, and Marc's like, "Yeah we know, because you emailed everybody that pointless photo." Amanda shows her how she put a hilarious mustache on the picture, but before Betty can get all offended there's a breaking news story about this tornado tearing through the shantytowns of Kansas. The newsreader is all, "We won't soon forget this iconic image of destruction," and Amanda somewhat unnecessarily points out that the iconic destruction is not unlike the cover, which is a lady in the middle of a tornado, and Betty stares at it and it goes all CGI for a weirdly long time, because Betty is I think maybe a touch schizophrenic.

Betty begs Phil to stop the shipment, and he tells her that, as cute as she was being earlier -- and she was -- she has no authority in reality. She gives a limp, "That's an order?" But he's kind of tired of her, and tells her he needs to hear from Daniel or Wili. She complains that she can't get through, and tries explaining how she begged for the responsibility, and really just needs help at this point, and he gives her four hours. She runs off screaming thanks and he totally goes, "Whateva!"

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Salsa music! That means Hilda! And I'm sure Justin, because he doesn't seem to go to school anymore, just lounge around in bright pink outfits and dispense sage and bitchy advice... and there they are. Hilda's all excited because her business permit has arrived, except obviously their little house is not zoned for that, and Ignacio has to explain to Hilda that she's been turned down. She goes off about how this is all Archie "The Rat" Rodriguez's fault because he is a Slick-Ass City Councilman who told her (and the breathless, insane way she shouts this is fucking hilarious) "You need to apply for your permit legally!" She sits down, bereft, and Justin's like, "Fuck it." Ignacio sticks his big old stupid face in there about how it's breaking the law, and Justin's all, "What, like they have undercover hair police hiding across the street?" Hilda gives him a look and says Papi's right, so Ignacio kisses her on the forehead and leaves, and she's like, "...We can't risk getting caught!" And they slap five. Hilda and Justin are the most awesome team.

Daniel walks around the woods thinking to himself about bold ideas and some girl he used to know with pretty and good penmanship, and then a girl falls on him out of a tree. She's cute, not glamorous but very pretty, kind of like an outdoorsy Lily van der Woodsen, and they wonder if her ankle's broken, and Daniel admits he's not a doctor, and she's like, "Duh" and he changes the subject to the somewhat apposite Why Were You Up A Tree, and she complains that everybody's always saying she's too old to do stuff. He is touched, because what's better than a free spirit or something, and he helps her back to the lodge.

Wili stalks the forest in a leopard hat and giant red plaid thing, with a big gold necklace, but her prey is Connor, in the cutest hunting vest and hat, and they end up pointing their guns at each other. He offers her the first shot, and she's like, "Aren't you supposed to be 'thinking?'" Then they engage in some single entendres about how being out in the woods and killing things is just like sex, and decide to hunt together as a substitute for the fucking they're obviously going to be doing at some point.

Betty's running around like a tornado girl when Hilda calls asking for all the hats Betty bought during her "ugly hat phase," which Betty remembers more as her "hat phase," and when Hilda explains her plan to create an "underground styling speakeasy," to give her haircuts a "sense of danger," Betty's like, "I don't even have time for your crazy ass, but whatever you're doing don't do it," and Hilda, having located the ugly hats, lets her go.

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"I smell pluck!" Marc says, and whirls around. Betty's hustling somewhere and he gets suspicious, so she babbles at him about how they took away everybody's phones at the retreat, so she has to go to Talmadge Hall, except the wait for a town car is 45 minutes, so she's taking the petty cash and calling a cab. Marc gives her a look and says the jig is up: "I underestimated you! I thought it was all about poor homely Betty worrying about the poor homely people of Kansas, but no, no, no, this is about your career!" He says if she averts this disaster she'll come up smelling like a she-ro, and she's like, "I don't care what I smell like!" His eyebrows give an eloquent, "Word." I think about this every week, to be honest, because you know she smells like something. I say off-brand Frito's like at a gas station. Betty Suarez smells like Frito's. He says no way is she going without him, all outshiny, but he'll be damned if they're taking a cab. He says Cliff's out of town, so they can take his car, and Amanda appears out of nowhere with bags packed, screaming "ROADTRIP? SHOTGUN!"

Driving Cliff's cute car upstate, with Amanda's cute little feet out the window and cute little disaster updates on the radio. Betty keeps telling him to drive his boyfriend's car more recklessly, and he fully goes, "Easy-Duzzy, Fuzzy Wuzzy!" He tells her to think of her worry lines, not that anybody would notice behind "that canopy of hair," giving Amanda a cheap laugh. Betty whines about the time crunch, and Marc's like, "Yeah, and constantly tormenting yourself with tornado updates is really helping," which is sort of sweet, and she starts yelling at him about her "process" and he's yelling back to get her big old face out of his face, and finally Amanda screams, "LADIES! Chillax!" Easy Does it, Fuzzy Wuzzy!

Amanda explains that she wants to talk about the wedding, and he changes the subject, but she's all over it: she only came on the trip to talk about the wedding anyway. Betty's so excited about Marc's wedding, and can't understand why he's not talking about it, saying that she would never ever stop talking about hers. "And we would all kill ourselves in six different ways," Marc snaps, and she asks if there are going to be two best men, which he says is offensive, which gives her liberal straight guilt, and she's all over gay marriage and whatever, but obviously the best man is Amanda. She starts talking to herself about how she already bought a fuschia dress and Betty's all No On Prop 8 and finally Marc turns on the radio and makes them listen to Christian radio. Which as far as I'm concerned is exactly what getting married's like anyway. Barf.

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Wili hears something and crosses her fingers that it's an eight-pointer, but no, just the one: Daniel, carrying his new crush. She screams -- "Is it too much to ask for something with antlers?" -- but then, that's about to be Connor, by the looks of things, and she tells him it's Daniel with "some cripply wood nymph." Connor draws his sight on them, and tells her sort of prickly that it's his fiancée Molly, which cheers Wili up because she's age-appropriate and wearing ugly boots.

Connor notes the surprise in Wili's voice, and she's like, "Well! She's wonderfully ordinary!" Connor steps over that steaming pile and rushes over, because she's limping. Just as Daniel's getting the 411 that she's there with an employee, Connor runs over and sweeps Molly into his arms, leaving Daniel holding his gun like a little boy. She giggles and grins goodbye over Connor's shoulder, but I mean: Daniel, you have the pectorals of a seriously overcompensating former fat kid. You could have carried her that whole way, if you'd thought about it.

Betty's still giving minutely updates about how far they're going, and Amanda's like, "Betty. Now's a good time for some stress eating." Assuming Cliff's a food-stasher, she opens his glovebox and squeals a high-pitched squeal. She tries to play it off, but finally gives up the goods: a Tiffany's receipt for two wedding rings. There's collective apoplexy in the car, and Marc does the following things in quick succession: has a panic attack, hits his asthma inhaler, snatches at the receipt, and crashes the car. The act out, horribly, is on just Betty's screaming mouth, like those scary teeth that walk.

Marc's screaming, "What have I done?" And Amanda helpfully explains that he has crashed Cliff's car, but Marc's been shocked by the crash into making the car an objective correlative for the "car" meaning heart that he has "crashed" meaning fucked with, so "How can he ever trust me again!?" Amanda's like, "Um, you get it fixed? And it's ugly anyway?" Then, intriguingly, Marc throws himself down on his knees with his ass in the air and starts rubbing his face on the pavement. Betty's yelling at the cab dispatcher because it's going to take too long, and tells Amanda to help her push the car, for some reason.

"These stilettos were not made for pushing," Amanda says, but then it occurs to her that they might be for something else. And it's a testament to the total insanity of Amanda that I thought she was going to kill a forest creature, but no, it's way better. She steps past Marc, who moans into the road, and then does a Rockette kick for a passing car which she immediately tosses into this very pomo Amanda-does-Madonna-does-Marilyn finger-in-the-mouth roadside attraction thing. (Remember "Justify My Love" and all the insane shit going on in the video, and then she's naked doing this exact thing?) It's pretty amazing, and they kind of gloss over it, but I think we just figured out what Amanda is, and it's the thing at the end of the hall of mirrors, like in *The Mouse & His Child*.

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The car doesn't stop, and Amanda does this adorably distracted mumble, "Wait, wait I wasn't ready..." And Marc's still rolling around ass-up on the ground, suggesting they get back to the city before five so they can all get completely drunk and act like none of this is happening. (This is also how I spent the last week.) Betty's like, "Marc, you stay in that strange position..." -- Marc gives a thumb up in his awesome driving gloves, like only Marc St. James would wear leather gloves to drive a Volvo station wagon, but also only Marc St. James can pull it off -- "...Amanda, you come with me." She wants to go back to this store she saw and get a ride. Amanda informs her that the stilettos were not made for walking. I

wonder what will happen when Amanda figures out what they actually are for? Betty heads off by herself and Amanda tells her to grab her some beef jerky, but at least she says thank you. Betty does that thing where somehow her deltoid muscles do the complaining, and keeps walking.

The secret knock at the Speakeasy Salon, hilariously, is "shave and a haircut," and Justin's challenge ("I got the horse right here") is met by the beautiful lady at the door with the proper response ("His name is Paul Revere"), but he doesn't let her in until she says she's not a cop. (And I am so morally opposed to musical theatre that I don't even get that joke, thank you very much. Although I will say that I saw the *Sweeney Todd* revival on Halloween and it was about the best thing that's ever happened to me, so you know I can't be trusted.) She's only there to have her lovely silver roots done, and gets past him easily. Inside, Hilda's jamming an ugly Betty hat onto the head of the last client, and giving her all kinds of paranoid rules and hassle, and as she welcomes the lovely lady into the salon, Ignacio appears in his Flushing Burger costume and his usual look of disapproval, and they talk about standing up for yourself or whatever. When he talks, I just hear the theme song to *Clone High*. Not because he has any relation to that show, because it's awesome and he's Ignacio Suarez, but I don't know. It soothes me. It's so pretty and self-aware, but it's a little sad, too. It's like the song equivalent of Wilhelmina Slater.

Betty's hoofing it down the road, gasping and adorable, and inside the store it is so effing creepy, with the jars of candy and everything kitschy and wooden and like rocking chairs. Where the fuck are they? This gives me hay fever even to just see it. You can smell the diesel on the guy. He's like, "Lady, I would love to give you a ride, but the government didn't want me driving after that third DWI." There's a little boy there, but he can't drive either: just throw a balsa airplane at her head while she's buying Amanda's beef jerky, and then hide behind some boxes of wine or buckshot or deer corn or whatever they sell at places like this, DIY divorce paperwork kits, Shrinky-Dinks, those little plastic purses that you squeeze sideways, I'm flying blind here. But not Betty, who snatches the airplane back from the kid and reads the side: "Sky-Rider." She asks for a phone book, and because I am distracted or illiterate, I was like, "What, she's going to dust some crops too? ...Oh, right."

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Claire Meade is wearing the greatest outfit in the history of clothing. Imagine! Willy Wonka 2.0—purple riding jacket, a huge white cravat, a giant Mad Hatter hat with an entire pheasant jacked up on top of it, but then everything's like... You know how in *Beetlejuice* all of the angles are off, and it makes your brain scared? It's like that. Like she's wearing something that science would say no, but nobody asked science. She wants her effin' phone, dog, and Daniel laughs because everybody's all about that right now. Claire asks if he had any revelations in the woods, and quickly determines that he's crushin' on somebody. He admits it but blows her off and she goes, "Her name wouldn't be Betty, would it?" He takes a second to think about that before exploding with some sound effects, and she giggles at him, but lets it sink in before tapping his arm: over his shoulder, the skywriting says, "DANIEL CALL BETTY."

While the tow-truck guy takes care of Cliff's car, Betty gets some beef jerky upside the head from Amanda ("This is Teriyaki!") and luxuriates in the praise from Daniel. They discuss how he paid for the skywriter, which cost less than the PR nightmare it could've been, which is in turn less than the suffering of the tornado victims, and the whole time they're in little

bubbles that keep popping and bouncing all over the screen, and finally they hang up and Wili tells him maybe they don't have to cancel the issue after all.

Ignacio makes his special "Betty Saved The Magazine Pancakes," which in fact are just pancakes with whipped cream smiley faces on them, and Hilda's so proud of her for thinking of the skywriting, and Betty's all, "I'm just happy to show I'm equal to the challenge" and then Justin comes in scandalized, brandishing a copy of the issue in question. On *Fashion Buzz* Lloyd's all about how is this Bad Timing or Bad Taste, because something terrible has happened in "one of those flat states I can't find on a map," and the real question now is what Daniel and Wili knew, when they knew it, and what they were wearing. And that it's not a cynical jump to think that this was no mistake: controversy sells... And gets ratings, which is why Lloyd vows to never stop talking about this story.

Betty follows Daniel down the hallway trying to help him figure out what happened, and he's all shade and guilty, and then this entire press corps appears and Lloyd pushes past Daniel to have a chat with "our favorite sweaty Modey," whose fault it was. He shows Betty a picture of her giving the final approval of the issue, and Daniel's all, "Betty is not responsible!" And Lloyd awesomely turns to the camera: "Its name is Betty." And I officially cannot be annoyed by him anymore, because that was awesome. Daniel protests that she tried to stop it, but Lloyd produces time-stamped footage of Betty in the Kreepy Kitschy Kountry Store "buying questionable meat products and stealing toys from children," and they both start babbling about the skywriter, at which point Lloyd calls bullshit on the whole ridiculous story. "Any last comments, Tornado Girl?"

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Cut to Daniel watching *FB* on Wili's office screen, feeling super guilty and wanting to come clean. "Don't be boob," Wili says, and points out that the bottom line is that it's a total hit. Daniel says he never would have gone through with it if he'd known Betty would get blamed, and Wili goes, "Tralalalala!" Just like David Bowie would. "Look at the big picture, *man*." This gradual dissolution of Wili's sense of self in the onslaught of Connor's sexual awesomeness is causing some pretty awesome dialogue. She says the frumpy assistant gets her feelings hurt today, it's no big because she's used to it, but it helps avoid layoffs tomorrow. It'll blow over, and in the meantime they can't get their hands dirty. "Taking the fall is what the little people are for!" I want a T-shirt with that on it. On the screen there's a tornado with Betty's stupid face coming out of it and it says TORNADO GIRL.

At Ignacio's, her phone is ringing off the hook and people are screaming at her about this and that. "That is disgusting! And not even physically possible!" She hangs up -- stop answering, douche -- and explains that somebody put her cell number on enemiesoftheheartland.com. What an awesome website. Hilda's grossed out, but nobody can figure out what happened, and they commiserate about how they tried to do the right thing and got burned. Ignacio produces fudge, but it's not enough to calm Betty down. She's really taking this hard. This is like the most emotion she's shown all season. She says everything's spinning out of control and gaining momentum and how normally she hates that saying "No good deed goes unpunished" -- me too -- but that it really seems to apply here... And Justin walks in wearing a hideous cheap-looking T-shirt with like glitter paint of TORNADO GIRL and an ugly hand-drawn picture that looks like a cross between Betty and Anna Wintour, and Justin apologizes and tells her not to talk it personally: it's just that there hasn't been "a T-shirtworthy scandal since Winona had her troubles." (Which is not true.

My BFF could have made a fortune with his EMERGENCY? CALL MARY-KATE T-shirt, except it was too soon and CafePress is *too square*.) Ignacio launches into some kind of soothing, poignant speech about a high school for clones.

Predictably, everybody waiting at Archie Rodriguez's office, which is like a thousand people for some reason, are all reading the Fashion Storm issue. Hilda is wearing a gorgeous cropped black leather jacket which does not distract Archie's secretary from identifying Betty as Tornado Girl, and whatever finally he comes out into the waiting room and they descend on him screaming, for no reason because this has nothing to do with him and everything to do with Hilda's sense of entitlement, so he's just kind of bemused while she accuses him of the nothing he did wrong, and storms off after yelling for awhile, and then Betty's like, "Her life is unbelievably shitty and this is the only good thing that has happened to her, ever. Fix it." And those puppydogs of hers are powerful juju, so you know he will. He's got some pretty good ones of his own after they leave. Dude, when did Ralph Macchio get hot? Maybe he's from that [Ryan Seacrest](#) species of person where puberty doesn't even start until fifty. Man what a whirlwind that will be. Ralph Macchio, I'm so proud of your changing body!

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Betty gets snatched from the *Mode* hallway by a mysterious person, who is Marc. By the light of the copier, he says strange things. "Powerful forces are arrayed against you," he says, and "Things are not what they seem," and "Not all birds fly south in the winter," but she's not feeling him so he finally flips the lights on: "For God's sake, Betty, I'm not going to jeopardize my job by spelling it out. Go talk to Phil at the loading dock." He turns the lights off again and whispers awesomely, "He knooooooooows."

It's ever so noir. Phil's not talking, so she bugs him and bugs him -- "You're like a gnat with glasses!" -- but when she says she can spend all day there not reading hatemail from the Daughters of Kansas, he admits she got a raw deal. "You're a pain in my ass, but you don't deserve this." He pulls her to a secret nook -- all this whispering! -- and tells her the call from Daniel wasn't to hold the order, but to ship it.

Daniel comes into his office and Betty's looking out the window so sadly I can't handle it. "You lied to my face, Daniel." He swears she wasn't supposed to go down, and protests that he defended her, but she's not having it. "Things are not as simple and you and I wish they were," he says, and calls it a business decision to save jobs. "And ruin my reputation!" He says it'll blow over, but she reminds him she's not Daniel Meade, she's just an assistant, hopefully not in perpetuity, and that all she has her is reputation, which is now ruined: Betty Suarez has become Tornado Girl. She takes off and the precursor to that sad song starts playing while Daniel feels bad. Oh man, they're totally going to play that sad song they play, with the piano! During Marc's conversation with Cliff, I just know it. Goddamn it, I have no immunity to that song! It makes me cry every time! I hate you, show!

Ignacio shoves yet more high-fat sugary snacks down Hilda's face and then Archie shows up with this big box, looking all dreamy, and Hilda's snappish. She asks if he's there to evict them now, which is hilarious, and he says he doesn't want to be the guy even tangentially related to the killing of her dreams, which he isn't except in her crazy head, and says he found a loophole. If 30% of her profits come from selling products, she can get a permit for a boutique. Hilda asks what she's supposed to sell, and Justin is amazing some more, lying on the couch and flipping bitchily through the Fashion Storm and pointing without looking:

"Are you kidding? First you can get rid of this hideous lamp, and then get rid of a half a dozen of those saints, and while you're at it get rid of Betty's hats." Without looking up, and you can tell the actor is loving every second. Everybody stares at him because he's turning into something strange and wonderful. Archie produces some random candles from the box and Ignacio doddles off to get his camera, and she flirts with Archie, and Justin pretends not to be loving that, and long after he's gone, Ignacio wanders back downstairs and looks old and lost and senile and Hilda's like, "Oh, Papi." It's cute.

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Betty clears her throat and tells Marc she talked to Phil and Daniel. He makes that face and says he has no idea what she's talking about, and they're very different people, but they are in the same position now -- which I never thought about -- and have to look out for each other. She says Cliff is having a good influence on him, and that he's a very lucky man, which provokes this snorting weird meltdown and Marc wanders off into the closet all, "He's ... Yeah. Yep, yep, yep, he's really really lucky..." She follows him and he swears everything's perfect, and she's like, "It's not my business, but something's up." His eyes are so sad! He turns on her all, "You're right. It's none of your business," and tries to ignore her, but those sweet eyes of hers work their magic and bore through his cute hairdo and he's like, "Fucking fine. I cheated on Cliff and then proposed out of guilt. And I am a horrible person, and you have to think so too, so get lost." She swears he's not a bad person, but that she knows from earlier today that lies from somebody you trust hurt worse than regular lies, and that Cliff deserves the truth. And then that fucking song starts playing. Damn! I knew it!

Wili tells the guys at the press conference that by tomorrow -- or by the latest, next week -- the hottest *Mode* issue in history will be off the stands. Lloyd asks, to loud laughter from the other journalists, what will happen to Tornado Girl. She tells him it's a private internal matter, and Daniel's looking all over, panicked, and finally spots Betty in the crowd. Molly's there too. Wili's like, "We're all human, we all make mistakes," and Daniel steps up and says the mistake was his, it was a cynical decision and he feels gross about it, but not as gross as watching his assistant go down for it. Wili's all, "I am SHOCKED!" and Daniel says they're donating all proceeds from the issue to a relief fund, shocking Connor and Wili both, and the crowd goes wild. He tries to get to Betty, but they're all throng, so he sweetly and frantically mouths, "I'm sorry!" And she silently thanks him ("There's glass between us! You can't handle my infinite nature, can you?") and feels great about life.

Marc's working when Cliff appears, asking what's so important that he had to rush over. He's totally afraid this is it, with his arms crossed and his back straight and strong. Don't! No! That song starts playing for real, and Marc stares at him for awhile before admitting... That he crashed Cliff's car. Cliff's entire body goes like a whooshing balloon, and he starts chuckling, all embarrassed and feeling silly, and Marc admits that's not all. He pushes a chair over and they sit down, and he puts his hand on Cliff's arm.

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Daniel looks out over the city and worries about what his good deed cost him, and Molly comes up to congratulate him on being awesome at the press conference. The second he hears her voice he lights up like a little boy. "Hey, Tornado Boy!" She says it's like a superhero name now, and that she's not often seen a bigshot go under the bus for an assistant, and then geeks out about her ankle splint and says the word splint like a hundred times and then admits she's on painkillers. He tells her to sit down and wait for Connor, but

it's their anniversary, so she says she's going to go find him. "Don't drink wine!" he blurts out as she's leaving, and it takes her a second to figure out the counter interactions of her meds before she adorably puts one hand over her mouth and nods. He crushes so hard, but secretly next door Wili's been watching the whole scene play out, and has an idea that for once involves destroying marriages and people for reasons other than financial gain.

Ignacio talks about how both Betty and Hilda fought for themselves, and it's awesome, and Justin shouts, "I taped that press conference and I just can't stop watching it!" Hilda goes off to find champagne, and he snits, "If it's not made in France it's sparkling wine, and that's bottle's from New Jersey." And I thought it was Hilda giggling, but actually it's Ignacio and this isn't the first time I've thought that, because Mr. Suarez laughs like a scary woman. Betty's still kind of bittersweet about the whole thing still, and confides in him that she honestly thought she'd done something so awesome that it "would make normal different." He tells her to keep putting one foot in front of the other, keep his eyes open for those open Sarah Palin doors, and eventually she will succeed. I love it when the 98-year-old guy in the burger uniform that laughs like a lady tells me my dreams can come true. It's so fucking comforting.

Daniel watches Connor kissing Molly and is jealous, but who knows who he's more jealous of, and Wili struts over with her slinky sexy gold dress and tells Connor that, since Daniel is now just handing out money, they have to strategize. He doesn't even put up a fight, just agrees to reschedule his anniversary dinner, because even he can hear the whistle of the anvils. The camera pushes toward the *Mode* logo on the wall so, so slowly, like just so you know it's going to be horrible, don't, don't, don't, and then there's my wonderful Cliff shrugging off Marc's arm and backing away and then walking down the hallway so embarrassed and sad and hurting, and it's really bad, and Marc watches him go.

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Then it's a short uneventful montage, Wili fully watching Molly fight Connor on the cancellation and then slowly drawing those same sheer curtains across her face like we got *The Magic Flute* over here for something, and all the Suarezes drinking champagne except for Justin, who is drinking milk out of a champagne flute, which is good and healthy. And speaking of healthy living, Cliff, just do what I've been doing all week. First go find some of that Stoli with the blue label. Copious amounts of that, a strange amount of "Coming Around Again" and "In The Winter" on repeat (because apparently heartbreak turns me into your mom), and then when the sun goes down you just go sarging and mug down with every low-risk/low-yield in a ten-mile radius. (And girl, let me just tell you that in Austin TX, the risk is *low*, and the ROI is *nonexistent*, which is perfect because it's quantity, not quality, that matters here. Don't even dress up. Fuck it.) Hopefully your bestie is also having a time, and you can do these activities as a pair; if you're making it a group activity, throw some Sparks or RBV's in the mix, which: I know, but trust me, this is my Grandmother's recipe. The only thing you *must* remember is this: if at any time a guy gets drunk enough in your home to start crying and talking about his dad, you *get the eff out*. You can't be there for that, because it gets too weird, and you want the opposite of weird, so be on the lookout because they all do it eventually. Then when you're done with your slut spiral and get up off your living room floor a week or two later, it's time to turn off the Carly Simon and Janis Ian, and clean your filthy house. Then you make some coffee, buy a cute outfit, and you're gold. Then you can come back on the show, right? Because a photographer in the fashion industry and you work for *Mode*? Right? RIGHT?

Next week: a 48-hour blank issue magazine contest pits Betty against Marc, and the prize would seem to be editorship. Hmmm.

COOK LIKE BETTY CROCKER/LOOK LIKE DONNA REED

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 9 | Aired on 11.20.2008

When Betty Met YETI - Marc and Betty clash over a kingmaking internship program, Justin gets dumped faster than a semi-sadist dentist without the guy ever figuring out they were dating, and we learn surprising new things about affirmative action.

Betty and Marc go up against one another in an assistant-on-assistant cage match to get some kind of... nebulous reality-show prize like a hundred bucks or hellish year in an apartment with one of those people from [Stylista](#), of the few that didn't end up in a mental hospital or whatever the eff goes on in that show, that isn't Megan or Kate or William, which is the sum total of worthwhile people on that fucking show, plus they get to hang out with Badgley (meh) Mischka (hot as fuck).

Meanwhile, Justin's (controversially Disneyesque) gay boyfriend, who doesn't know he's gay, gets a telegram from Everybody On Earth telling him how gay they are, delivered by his friends whose bangs are even gayer than his own. So he chills it with Justin for the time being, but really it's because ABC [hates gay American men and women now](#). Which is stupid, because gay people are obviously just like real people but slightly awesomer, and you may think it was for other reasons but you'd be wrong, because even in 2008 we're mostly all kind of creeped out by gay people, which yes, makes us assholes, but is a lot easier to feel when they act like screaming infants denied their tit and completely forget what makes them strong. I'm *serious*, like, the last time I got enraged enough to protest about the actions of another state's legislature in a way that proved nothing and only ruined unrelated people's days so they would know how pissy I felt about something that didn't affect me or them in any way was like, the Louisiana Purchase in 1803! Those Cajun bitches!

Hilda "solves" this problem by taking him to *In The Heights* herself, thereby instantly turning Justin fifty times gayer than the already impressive previous gayness of him, not to mention continuing the cycle of "creeped out" vs. "creepier than actual sex weirdos" that has characterized the endlessly fascinating gay/straight relationship since whining was invented. Meanwhile, the actual tremendous part of being gay, where you kiss dudes, is ignored. Luckily, Hilda looks so fucking hot this season you don't even really think about how sad it is until it's too late to save Justin.

So while Daniel and Wili edge ever closer to destroying Connor and Molly's entire relationship, Betty and Marc play out this whole affirmative action thing that is simultaneously obtuse, abstruse, topical of the past, glossed over, and ... sort of perfectly correct. There's not Anita Hill, but we do get major Hillary, so there you go. Racism is a feminist issue, because once you hit like 1992 everything is.

Caucasian Homosexual Marc doesn't get into the program, and Mexican-American Callipygian Betty does, Marc goes to the unforgiveable place of how it's because she's fat or Mexican or some shit, Betty finds out he's unforgivably right, she gives up her Mexican place because white homos are simply unrepresented in the fashion industry and it's a motherfucking tradge, and then they both get in on a technicality because Daniel Meade wrote a letter or something. Because what trumps affirmative action is straight rich white dudes every fucking time, which is why they so often save the day. And yes, you're welcome!

Don't get me twisted: I want to be clear that I don't give a fuck, and as a gay white man from a family of rich white men, I have less than one RDA of opinion on this. So here's my take: take what you can fucking get and be compassionate when you can, because no matter what disadvantages or advantages or whatever you have, there are some bitches want to screw you, and you're always the bitch screwing somebody else, and our duty is to remember there's always a way we can all get out alive.

However. I am at a loss as to how an affirmative action story *taking place in the world of fashion* between a *gay man who wears pearls* and a 300-pound Latina who dresses like a *circus clown's PTSD* can actually have this fight. So you kind of have to fill in the blanks. Which, since both Cliff and Amanda are missing this week, you will have plenty of effing time to do.

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Betty's got some decent clothes happening -- giant Minnie Mouse bow notwithstanding -- when Amanda summons her with a tiny handbell to the bathtub, where she's lounging in a mountain of delightful bubbles. One-room apartment + clawfoot tub + Amanda's total lack of boundaries = Hilarity. She explains that she got the bell for Halston, but he's a bad doggie and doesn't come when she rings it -- whereas Betty comes running. "You're a good dog!" Amanda says, tickling Betty's tummy with the loofah, and Betty puts her foot down in what are no doubt sensible shoes. She tries to clarify for Amanda that she is not her assistant -- while simultaneously advising her of her schedule for the day and picking up her random bras and panties strewn about the place -- and Amanda assures her she thinks of her more as a roommate... And a maid. She asks Betty to fetch her some coffee, and she replies that it's not her job...

Cut to Betty happily fetching coffee for Daniel, because that actually is her job. She has also jacked a hideous clown jacket and stupid red beret over her formerly cute outfit, because... Maybe she resents fashion as a synecdoche for hating her life, and thus seeks to wound it at any opportunity. Around the corner is [Leo](#)/Nick Pepper, that sleazy-sexiest assistant guy from *Mode* that she got into the dick-swinging fight with at the Renaissance Faire restaurant back when Henry and his sick body were still around. Turns out he left with Alexis and has since pulled a [Ryan the Temp](#) thanks to the leg up provided by YETI (the Young Editor's Training Initiative) and now has his own assistant. Betty seems to think the program is like Hogwarts for getting out of being an assistant, and he assures her that this is the case. Sparkly music of Betty's dreams, cloudy weird light in her eyes, and it's done. She informs Daniel that he'll be sponsoring her, and asks for a recommendation letter (<1 page), and he gets that "I am going to completely flake and it's going to be sad" face he gets when you count on him.

Wili spots Connor canoodling with darling Molly ("Gross!" she yells to herself, awesomely) and tries to run away, but gets caught talking to them gross couple. Wili calls her "coltish" what with her hair in a ponytail, and Molly tells her that she's got some kind of Native American coming to visit her school class, so Wili half-heartedly talks shit about her pathetic life for a second before pulling a total Girl World maneuver and inviting her to a future brunch together.

...Which of course she and Marc both agree she should be murdered before attending such a nightmare. Wili can't get it: Connor's shrewd, ambitious and hot just like Wili, so why on Earth is he with a coltish farm girl (in a Martha's Vineyard sort of way, I guess) like Molly? Marc's like, "Word, he's hot. He's the Male-amina!" They scheme for her to drag him to an investor's meeting in Florida and show him her underwear. "It's not about the sex, I can see a future with him," she says, and Marc's like, "Or just show him your boob." They agree she still has it, and then he fans her for awhile because the "it" she has is clearly "the hot flashes."

Betty goes galumphing into the YETI conference without doing a lick of research, wafted along on dreams and starlight and silly music. The friendly, gorgeous woman she meets with has the intense name of Pilar Mejia, and informs her that she's got a year to come up with a cover, TOC and letter from the editor for an original magazine concept that defines her. Kind of like *Talk* or *Jane*, but less up itself. Betty assures her that she can do the real deadline for this year, which is in 48 hours, because she does it all the time and besides, she can't wait for her actual life to start already. Pilar lets her go with it, because she's adorable, and wishes her a very sympathetic good luck.

If you had a YETI magazine, what would it be? Mine would be like ... a cross between *O* and *Soldier Of Fortune*, with fun recipes and party ideas, cool shopping spreads for trendy hipster shit like on [Stylista](#), and ads in the back for scary Montana survivalist camps and articles like, "Go Fuck Your Breast Implants, Chief" and "How I Learned To Take Apart An AK-47 Blindfolded ... And Fell In Love!" and "Paying For Your MP3s is Letting The Terrorists Win." Plus things that could help you, like "Training Nerds To Do All Your Shit For You Using The Nebulous Promise Of Vaguely Sexual Interaction," a ten-part series covering everything from car detailing to cable installation to renting movies and bringing home Americone Dream without being asked. Also some shit about God, because sometimes I like to talk about that; a linguistic *Believe It Or Not* cartoon; six pages of Lynda Barry strips; a section about the Jungian themes and significance of a different television show each month; and a column about not fucking up your gay kid. It will be called *Dear Hilda* and it will be addressed to a hypothetical woman named Hilda who is fucking up her gay kid. Wouldn't that be a great magazine? I would read the *shit* out of that magazine.

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While we were talking about that, Betty made the intriguing choice of creating a fashion magazine. Even the ever-supportive, pointless Ignacio is like, "Girl, for real?" Yes, for real. Obviously. Betty's like, "It expresses me and who I am because this is my life," and Hilda's like "Once you get into the program you can make something that *isn't* fashion." Justin wigs out about how his boyfriend hasn't ever seen the movie of *Little Shop Of Horrors* and they have to watch it before seeing their school's production. I sympathize with that. Ignacio's like, "Awesome, let's all get going," and Hilda's like, "I loooove Justin's boyfriend, plus he has a guy around and that's probably a good idea because of how he is." Ignacio, in his flowered apron, takes a strong stand for his masculinity, and they humor him.

Wili's wearing a hellacious outfit that looks like a Ford F-450 in the shape of a dress, I can't even talk about it, and makes Connor dump his visit to Molly's classroom so they can go to Florida and she can flash her boob. But who will replace him at Molly's classroom? Ah, I see you've watched TV before. I knew you were smart. And where's Daniel now? Walking into the closet as Christina desperately tries to help Betty choose non-hideous clothes for her magazine cover. She is if course brutally rebuffed, the word "bolero" is mentioned,

tragically, and Christina points out that the Letter from the Editor Betty's slaving over should be the easiest part, considering Daniel does it every month.

Dude, I love those. I love men's magazines letters from the editor sometimes more than the magazine. They're like the opposite of the unholy hellride that is the back page of *Entertainment Weekly* where Stephen King or fuckin' Diablo Cody is all, "I have a way of speaking and some opinions from when I was a teenager that are totally irrelevant! I bought a Zune that runs on wooden nickels! I'm going to see NKOTB in concert, honest to blog!" But in men's magazines it's all, "I got my French cuffs wet and you know how silk is, so then I killed myself in front of the Kirche am Steinhof in Vienna by drinking that coffee they make from cat shit with some pills I got in Mexico and I saw Gwyneth Paltrow at some political function and somebody got rowdy at Nobu and I talk about sex all the time but you and I both know I'm too busy for that right now mister and here's my BMI this month." They always make you feel like you really wish you were friends with them, but that if you were friends with them you would desperately wish not to be friends with them. Like Tom Ford.

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He signs out a new tie and then takes in the scene of Betty working on her magazine, and he and Christina are horrified by how she's doing a fashion magazine, and Betty's like, "Why on earth does everybody thing I'm going to fuck this up," and then Christina forces her to choose the correct vest after like ten years, and she's so pretty but I just don't get it. Then Betty's face turns green...

Which turns into Audrey II, where Justin is getting totally bounced before "Suddenly Seymour" by Randy's intensely homophobic (ie., normal) teenage friends. Randy thinks a lot about this and has some trepidation, but whatever: "Suddenly Seymour" is the most beautiful song in the entire world. He'll give in.

Betty and Christina are finishing up her outfit for the cover, and then Marc and Amanda sweep in signing out closet items left and right, because: Marc is also going for YETI. Betty's like, "What?" and he admits that he does try to keep a low profile. Wearing a blue velvet dinner jacket, striped women's scarf, and cartoon T-shirt with a tuxedo drawn on it in either puffy paint or Froot Loops, and he says he likes to keep a low profile. Christina, as usual, spills the beans about how Betty's doing a fashion magazine, and everybody shivers for a second, and Amanda sweetly whispers, "Betty, you know *fashion* means *clothes*, right?" *Marcmoohoo* has about how he's totally in, and Christina yells something incomprehensible in that voice of hers, and he asks if her book will be called *Clashing Patterns Digest*, then informs her that she has no chance because they only take one assistant from a given magazine, and between "this" (his fierce self) and "this" (her hot tranny mess look), you know they're taking Marc. Amanda follows after shooting Betty a somewhat sympathetic worry look that makes her seem like she's strangling. Betty just stares all bug-eyed at nothing, because honestly.

Justin comes home freaking out about *Little Shop*, distracting Hilda from her pedicure. She corrects her "baby boy" to "big strong man," and he worries slightly about Randy taking off right after the show. Hilda sets them up on a super tight date to see *In The Heights* on Broadway, and Justin runs upstairs to get his little heart broken, and then Betty comes in to overeat and cry about how dumb her whole fashion mag/zero turnaround thing is turning out to obviously be. Then Ignacio produces the *Betty Review* Betty made when she was a

little kid and her magazine career began. Ignacio points out that she made this crappy kid's stuff in a single afternoon, and Hilda's like, give them that. Which: Not exactly, but yes.

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Betty rushes into the office and drinks a bunch of coffee and does insane dances and basically creates the magazine I was describing earlier. By next morning, she's zooming around like Kate Moss with her hair looking fifty times crazier than normal. She now looks like that woman on *The Simpsons* with the cats all over her. And she sounds like her too. She crawls up Daniel's ass about the recommendation, which we all know he's going to flake out about, and he tells her to write it herself and he'll sign it.

Connor rescues him from her crazy eyes and wild hair and all, and asks Daniel to go speak to Molly's class. Daniel makes it super obvious that he's crushing on Molly, and yet again you see that of all the things Connor is good at, blatant sexual attraction is not one. But you know, I bet he is so used to having that shooting at him from all directions at all times that it doesn't even register. As smooth as Wilhelmina is, I bet like the guy at the butcher shop acts the same way around Connor. Anyway, he agrees, and Betty's like, "Stop doing your job and favors for your coworkers and start paying attention to me!" but he has to go crush on Molly some more, so he pulls a pencil out of the tangled insane mess of Betty's hair and takes off. There is an entire desk's worth of random shit in there.

Later -- with pencils in her hair -- Molly watches Daniel be adorable with all the little kids, which has nothing to do with his job and has everything to do with him being awesome. Other options the kids offered as alternatives: Dancer, Monkey, and Chinese Person. Obviously they are making these choices with an eye toward getting into YETI. He tells Molly how much he loves kids and wants them, missing DJ a little bit, and then they sort of fall in love with each other a little bit, and giggle. They both laugh like dorks, it is fabulous.

Betty finally gives up on Daniel with her usual brokenhearted lack of foresight and heads in to meet the YETI panel. I wish Pilar Mejia were on this show every week, she's amazing. Betty tells the panel that while she loves working at *Mode*, she's over the concept of selling women the image of the thing they want to become: why not celebrate what women already are? They are as bored by this as you just were. Pilar proudly watches her elaborate, saying that she wants to serve the young women who want to be inspired beyond celebrities and clothing, and the female panel member says this is her daughter. Welcome to *Bmagazine*, which has Betty's Boleyn necklace in the middle of the cover and lots of famous and powerful, awesome women. Tagline: "Be thoughtful, be confident, be yourself. *B magazine*." Panel and Pilar love it, and she pulls out her editor letter.

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Later on, Ignacio and Hilda are all over her and the celebrate and scream their asses off, delighting passersby, and then Marc looking like six feet of something hard and shiny enters with a whole posse of hot bitches and a seriously awesome look on his face. The hot bitches bust out in formation and set all his materials out. Amanda explains his concept: "*A-List Magazine*: for all things fashion, fabulous and famous." Ignacio calls this "fluff" and Hilda calls it "done," but Marc goes to the Lauren Zalaznick place where it's more about investigating the why at the same time as the what: why we obsess about the things we obsess about. Neat. Hilda gets scared by the words even though she doesn't really get them. He hands over a copy of his magazine, which contains an essay by David Sedaris, and tells

Hilda she can keep it. Betty is shocked to the core by the concept of offset printing, despite working in publication for the last three years, and all the Suarezes sort of crumple. Badgely (stiff but nice) and Mischka (hot and dumb) show up and it turns out they're Marc's sponsors for YETI. Awesomely, Marc gets the opportunity to bashfully slap them on the shoulders and go, "Oh, Marc! James!" Right before the panelist woman with the daughter comes running up yelling "Marc St. James!" That's brilliant. This lady takes the huge group of A-Listers into the room, and the Suarezes continue to be unable to catch a break.

Betty, old and grey, sits at her desk applying to YETI for the 49th year in a row, still without a recommendation from Daniel, who is of course totally hot no matter how much old person makeup they put on him. Nightmare! Daniel comes running in to wake her up and do the YETI work, and she PMs him that he missed it. She's refusing to talk to him, and he feels terrible, but: Molly, which he can't tell her of course, so he shuts his phone off and apologizes some more. She almost starts crying as she admits that she wouldn't have gotten in anyway, due to the fact that Marc is awesome, but then the phone rings and she's in. Obviously. Immediately she forgets everything that just happening and goes stomping around the place in celebration. Daniel tries to share in the celebration, but she's not having it; elsewhere, Marc gets scared.

Wili and Connor come back to her ridiculous suite after the meeting, and she flirts her ass off. The hotel, fittingly, looks like every *Nip/Tuck* set at once, all occupying the same place. It's sort of terrifying. They want to have dinner, but none of the nearby restaurants are fittingly tasteful -- "We've Got Crabs" one boasts -- so Wili orders room service, but cocks one of her boobs just in case.

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After school Justin's like, "We are going on a fabulous Broadway date!" and Randy totally shuts him down with the other owners-of-bangs looking on. Justin totally doesn't get it the entire time and finally Randy's like, "You are dumped." The judging eyes of the boys glare at him and he screams at Justin to stop following him around and get a life. Instead of doing so, Justin feels horrible and a little confused.

Betty visits Marc, who is ignoring her in his sleep mask with tea: "Marc isn't in right now, but if you leave your name and number, he'll never speak to you again, you odious seacow, Betty. Beeeep." She apologizes and says she liked his presentation, and he says his was way better, and she says maybe it's just about how bad she wants it. Marc makes the very amazing point that it's pretty apparent he wants to be a fashion editor too, which is why he graduated from FIT, spent a summer abroad studying menswear in Milan, spent four years working for -- he points angrily at Wili's office -- the best creative director in the entire industry, who neither knows nor would care that he even applied to YETI. Betty's heart breaks for him, because seriously. She floats maybe that it was the concept, and it's like "Betty, don't poke the bear" because people like Betty like to go over things and wonder how and why they failed, but that's not how people like Marc feel better, so everything she says isn't "It's not so bad" but "Here's why it is so bad," which is the opposite, and you know what she's like, it's neverending, and finally he just laughs in her face.

"You really think that what you did in two days is better than what I spent three months working on? Are you really going to make me say it? You helped them meet their quota. They picked you, *Betty Suarez*, of *Queens*, because you're Latina. You're the token ethnic girl." Betty can't even handle that, and Marc doesn't feel great about it, but she points out

that this is the ugliest of all the many ugly things he's ever said to her. He apologizes, but assures her it's the truth.

Which is a sticky fucking wicket. Because if he's wrong, you just ruined one of the more compelling and subtle characters on television, because that shit is unforgiveable. Part of the burden of living in a democratic society is that there is shit you *do not say*, because admitting it's a possibility makes everything fall apart. And if you say it, you don't use it like a weapon. And if you use it like a weapon, you don't do it in a sour grapes situation. And if you do say it in anger, you don't say it to somebody you love. And if you don't say it in anger, that's even worse. He *didn't* say it in anger. Which makes it maybe the most brutal thing that's ever happened on the show, because it's not even funny like a pregnant woman falling down stairs or stealing cold semen from a corpse: it's actually gross. And really, really sad. Plus, the bitch cheated on Cliff and he's on thin motherfucking ice this week anyway.

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But if he's *not* wrong, it's still not okay that he said it, but you've just created a much larger issue, which is that you're taking one of the biggest things to happen to a given minority in television in the last ten years, which is a smart and glamorous show that manages to honor many of the realities associated with that minority, and using that show to tell this constituency that their dreams are worthless and that the little asterisk by their every accomplishment -- of which, I assure you, they are fucking already aware -- is something that yes, white people do often wonder about, and in their uglier moments think about. Which is sort of a nightmare on every fucking level.

Now, you know I love this show and I think it's smarter than we give it credit for being, but I think the show has given itself quite a fucking challenge here. Do they pull it off? I think they do, but I don't have a vested interest either way, because I'm more interested in getting paid than getting praised. On the other hand, I've never been in the position of having to wonder if on a hypothetically level playing field -- which will never actually exist even if we live to be thousands of years old -- I actually earned what I got, and if that's true, if anybody would believe it. Which is nassssty to think about on both sides, because "affirmative action" is used as both invocation and curse word almost as much as "meritocracy," which is a word that shouldn't mean what it does. So yeah, I do love this episode -- for going there, for staying there, and ultimately making an entirely different and more useful (nonpartisan/post-hate/bilateral/real-world) point about it -- but we can now safely say that whatever Hilda says is what I'm going to end up agreeing with... And you and I both already knew that.

Betty feels very sad, and Hilda and Ignacio come and scream at her in Spanish for about a million years, making her feel ever more Mexican, and she takes them aside and tells them about what Marc said, and how she called YETI and they "didn't exactly deny it," and then Hilda -- God love her -- is like, "Who fucking cares how you got in?" Betty, of course, *totally cares*, which is what having feelings gets you, and Hilda's like, "Look. You get a certain amount of advantages no matter who you are, and you have to use them, because the negatives always outweigh the positives. Scorching-hot babydaddy? Gunned down for no reason, spent the month in bed with a ghost. Gay son on a date? One slight case of gay panic and those tickets are useless. Mom died, Dad *sucks*, last boyfriend married, latest boyfriend thinks *plain white candles* are the way to a woman's heart, my only friends are my fat loser sister and my tiny gay son, and I put in weaves for a living. That's my *career*. So yes. I dress like a whore when I go to the butcher shop, and if you don't understand what I mean when I

say that, I will seriously get somebody in here to figure you out, because you need the talking cure." And she calls her breasts "the Pointer Sisters," which additionally rules.

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Ignacio gives her the Young Immigrant story about how he was mistaken for a Puerto Rican and when he corrected him the guy said, "*Mexican?* Even worse." That's ... I don't even know if I'm supposed to laugh at that so I'm going to say I didn't. "If being Mexican *helped* this time? Fucking good." Betty replies to the one piece of good advice her father ever gave her with yet more pooh-pooh face, and it's not out of character, but I wish Ignacio had talked more, because that's the part I *really* have no way of understanding, but also I can't believe I just said that.

Wili pours the wine and they discuss free-spirited, forthright Molly ("Yeah, she's a peach," Wili says) and she tries to get him to admit that they have no reason to be together. He says the differences were once aphrodisiac... "And now?" she asks, and he finally figures it out after about a month: "And *now* we're engaged." Then they flirt some more and drink the entire bottle of wine.

Justin comes in like a hurricane that just got dumped, and he cries on the stairs and won't talk about it, and it is very heartbreaking, and Hilda's like, "How on earth could that have gone wrong?" Because she's the only person more deluded about acceptable public behavior than he is, she is really flummoxed.

Daniel reads the kids' thank you notes, giggling adorably about one addressed to "Danielle" which ends, "You are old!" He calls Molly to thank her for the thank you notes, and she compliments him on the macaroni earrings he made, and they laugh and laugh. Also laughing are Wili and Connor: he's drunk and she's dumping her wine in the ice bucket. "You know Wil, I disagree with everybody at the office: I think you're great!" She takes that in stride, and he absentmindedly spins the empty bottle around on the obvious faux-fur blanket they're stretched out on, and she gets right up in there and he calls this "Spin The Bottle" a very dangerous game. She totally almost gets him to kiss her, and it's sexy. He goes, "You are very hard to resist," and she goes, "Then cut it the fuck out," and he almost does, but then he runs away and tells her pull it together and stop trying to bone him. *Like he just noticed* everybody always trying to bone him! And then she's alone on the ugly stupid blanket like, "Nuts."

Betty visits Marc's desk with a packet: "Here. You're in. You were right, your presentation was better, so I'm out. You're in." He explains to her that she's acting insane -- her outfit's pretty cute also, I'm noticing -- and that as a person who has been on the receiving end of discrimination his whole life, I guess for being *unbearably adorable*, and that he would run with this advantage in a hot minute. "MARC. You are a gay man in the fashion industry. Tell me how sad your life is again." He tries to tell her that this earns him nothing and then some random queen appears out of nowhere and gives him Madonna tickets because of the secret underground Gay Mafia.

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(Which yes, it does exist, but Madonna? Not in *my* secret underground Gay Mafia. Maybe as far as Lykke Li, but come on. Who writes this show, those guys that still tan? OMG are there *multiple* secret underground Gay Mafias? That makes total sense. And if so, the logical

next question is whether there's some kind of One Ring To Make Them All My Bitches scenario that can play out where you unite all the secret underground Gay Mafias, like ... the Five "Families." Because that would make everything so much easier... Except probably it involves going to those scary Lights Out parties at Geffen's house, which: Never. Again. But I do love the sort of *Fairy Godfather* pageantry of like: In London, something mysterious happens to Alexander McQueen's tartan samples -- Elton John's wig falls off in Berlin -- Kylie breaks a heel -- Kathy Griffin shuts up for a second -- Margaret Cho decides to say something funny -- Tom Ford has a waxing mishap, you know, like all at once, and then you cut to a sort of high-strung laughing shadowy figure shaking all over like a rescue greyhound, and it's Chris Crocker putting a plastic crown on his head and he's going, "It's Britney, bitch" and then the maid closes the door and you just have to wonder: What next?)

She presses him to take the packet and promises to apply next year, and tells him to take it before she changes her mind. Because I'm so sure YETI is all about getting jerked around. He apologizes intensely for what he said, and tries to prove he's not racist by pointing out that some of the hottest guys he's ever "dated" were Latino, which is gold star for effort but sort of too stupid to really acknowledge, and she kind of just stares at him and walks away. He thanks her and she grins hugely to herself, but she keeps walking.

Hilda watches Justin feel horrible, and begs him to talk about it, and he won't because he has no idea what actually happened. "I'm on your side," she says, and he tells her that Randy went from being his best friend, but now he hates Justin because of his friends. "That's their problem, because you're perfect," she says. Which is sort of a toxic thing to tell a kid who's trying to fit in -- for once -- and finishes up: "All that matters is that you never for a second change who you are," which is ... good advice, but only the lesser half of the good advice, because the other half is, "Fitting in is a struggle for everyone on earth, so do what you have to do, but don't lose sight of yourself." Maybe that's implied. Anyway, he offers to take her to the show instead, and she's overjoyed. And then he wonderful all by himself, but still sad. Oh, Justin. Teenagerhood is a slow-motion bloody car accident for everybody, and I have never been a straight teenage boy and I can only *imagine* how fucked up that is, but it's the awful shit that happens to us in high school that makes us awesome if we work it, so I say bring the noise. He's a strong kid with strong role models and good bone structure. He can do this.

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Wili comes home all bereft whining about Molly, and Marc points out she doesn't even wear eyeliner. Wili says she's giving up on Connor, because she's not begging: "If he wants to marry that do-gooding gremlin, it's his choice." I don't see this resolution sticking, frankly. Marc apologizes to her, knowing what it is to be unlucky in love, and she turns on him: "For WHAT?" He gets the fuck out of there, because of the face, and she interrogates him on the YETI thing. "I trust that's not going to interfere with your work here? Good. I can't think of anyone more deserving. Congratulations." And that's Marc's magic moment, and it's good.

Daniel PMs Betty to come talk to him, and she's still pissy, and he apologizes for blowing off the YETI letter yet again, and now she's given her place to Marc... But he made some calls and got her in based on the fact that she worked at *Player* at the beginning of the season, so now she and Marc are on different magazines. She's in. And the recommendation letter? Six pages long. She nearly cries, and he says the first draft was even longer. I love those two. She apologizes for freaking out and he begs her not to succeed at the rate she's capable of,

because he loves her and doesn't want her to leave. On the other hand, he figures in ten years he'll be *her* assistant. She hugs him and he lights up so bright!

Betty goes over her packet, and Marc calls her from across the office: Anna Wintour and Tina Brown guest speaking? In the same week, they giggle on the phone and grin wonderfully at each other, and then Wili and Daniel both issue their decrees from their offices, and they smile goodbye.

Oh, this will be fun. Send me your YETI proposals by the end of the week, and we'll go over them in a couple of weeks when Betty and Amanda go crazy all over New York. That should add some spice to the spice. Stay ugly!

"NO CRIMES, REAL PEEPS, SADDLE UP"

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 10 | Aired on 12.04.2008

Bad Amanda - Betty's night out with Amanda is rife with highjinks; Wilhelmina deals with her babymama drama; Daniel's Molly crush puts everybody on shout.

Amanda and Betty get an assignment to go out on the town and ... something, it doesn't make a whole lot of sense. Like they're meant to blow ten thousand bucks, but without spending any money, or... Very *Breakfast At Tiffany's*, this concept. They pick up a couple of Eurotrashers at an art show, get the boys to wine and dine them, but then the dudes stick them with a check in the thousands. While Amanda is, of course, more than happy to dine and dash, some quick thinking (and *Mode* name-dropping) from Betty not only solves the problem but gets them a regular column. Which is good, because beyond eating all of her food and ruining most of her life -- while blaming "Bad Ronald," who lives in the walls! ["Yay! I'm not the only one who remembers that cheesy movie." -- Angel] -- Amanda also manages to misplace the rent.

Betty throws a massive hissy and runs to Queens, where Ignacio actually gives her good advice for once: basically, that Amanda is awesome and has much to teach us all, while Betty is pretty much a sopping rag of suck a lot of the time. Amanda gets a second job of the Flushing Burger variety, they become more like each other, and continue to fall madly and deeply in love with each other to the point where nobody's sure where one of them ends and the other begins, et cetera, Betty starts cooking for Amanda and buying her Prada knockoffs, they cry and they laugh and they respect each other's viewpoints...

You know what? None of this matters, because Betty spends most of the episode wearing *the most effed-up thing she has ever worn*. It's like... Well, tell me if this is a movie or I just made it up from elements of other movies I saw on *Mystery Science Theatre*. There's like Santa Claus, and Martians, and some dance numbers, and those weird dominatrix women they have up there on the moon, right, and there's a rocket ship, and maybe a giant gorilla fights a giant lizard that shoots fire. Also there is a turtle that can fly, but has no face, and it shoots electricity of some kind. And so the dominatrix women need babies, or sex, or it's really cold there or something, and they have pointy shoulder pads and long puffed sleeves and tight bodices and look totally crazy -- they're kind of like Princess Barbie's friend Wanda from *Sandman* at the end, in Barbie's dream -- and walk around and yell and shoot lasers from laser guns, and eventually because it's the '50s they settle down: That's exactly how Betty is dressed the entire time. She's like a spell cast by the vomit of a nightmare of a clown.

Anyway Ignacio is awesome for once, Hilda is not really around but very cool, and also behaving out of character is Christina, who manages a partial *raison d'etre* by bonding with Wilhelmina over their baby (a boy!) and Wili's crush on Connor, which is getting *unsettling*! And gets a major revival in the form of Daniel's (surprisingly boring) date with Connor's fiancée Molly. They eat-cute and romp around Platonically in the Closet, *nearrrrrrly* kiss, and then split up again so Daniel can do that face he does. Marc, in like his sole appearance in the episode, blows a security guard to get tape -- and Wili realizes that Daniel (looking at Molly the way "Betty looks at a cheeseburger") is completely in love.

Join us next time for the episode where Ignacio Suarez is, judging by the hypermania of the advertisements, ripped apart by wild dogs. Horrible tragedy? Or *Greatest Christmas Wish*?

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Hilda has apparently only gotten half the point that Karate Kutie tried to get across -- yes, she can legitimize her home business by deriving 30% of her profits from merchandising, but... I don't think selling illegal Chinatown knockoffs from that well-known atelier PLADA is really what he had in mind. Betty, being as we all know a first-class G-L-A-M-O-R-O-U-S label queen, turns up her nose at the PLADA handbags and shades. Just not up to her high fashion *Mode* tastes. Hilda's like, "As though my trashy clients will notice, these sunglasses were \$2 a pair." Hilda, sometimes your hustler nature and survivor scrappiness actually do make you look sort of vaguely disgusting, mostly when you fall into the Flushing trap of animal prints, and yet I cannot in good conscience advise, obviously, that you do anything but the opposite of what Betty says.

This snootitude would be funny of Betty any day -- because God knows without compassionate guidance she'd be wearing them on her head or as giant hideous necklaces -- but is *especially* retarded today, because she's wearing *pointy* puffed sleeves like a creepy-bisexual/dominatrix-vibe villain from the Planet Mongo, in a psychedelic *flower* print, over a purple *turtleneck*. It's like her usual hideous clothing is feeling whimsical and decided to wear a costume over itself. And then of course her Anne Boleyn "B" necklace, because sometimes you just need to accessorize a bit more, and on top of it all the big wide green butterfly belt *cinching all that shit together*. I wish this outfit and Claire Meade's [Pip Pip Mad Hatter Old Chum](#) number from last week would get a spinoff series where they roam around in a old schoolbus, blowing people's minds.

Betty's out of OJ, and whines about how living with Amanda has done the opposite of the money-saving roommate thing she's heard of, and no matter how much she labels her food and juices, Amanda does not seem to notice. Hilda asks if she's been contributing meaningfully in any way -- supplementary to the MacArthur Genius Grant that is her very presence, I suppose -- and Betty says she's "hinted," which you know is Betty-speak for "No, because I am weak of spine, but I do sit around feeling resentful and horrible inside, which counts for something." Hilda suggests she try the pithy and always successful, "Where's my rent, *bitch*," which I guess she picked up from Justin, and Betty goes on a spiel about how yes, Amanda has made poor choices and racked up debt, etc., but she's not... I don't know how on Earth Betty would have managed to make her sunshine-and-duckies conclusion here, but thank God it's Amanda.

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She comes in with about sixteen shiny bags from various stores and launches into a wildly entertaining recounting of her last several hours: "You will not believe how much money I saved today! Huge sale. I had to get up crazy early to beat the crowds... That's a lie, I was actually out clubbing and I figured, what the hell? I'll just stay up all night. It was totally worth it!" Betty tries to explain that buying things on sale is still not saving money, and Amanda goes, "Isn't it?" kind of breezily, and Betty underlines that it is not, and then Amanda makes that sexy-sneaky eyebrow face and goes, "*Isn't it?*" Which is a thing that she does in every scene of this entire episode, and while I hate shtick I have to say that my Amanda shtick threshold is way higher than most other shtick thresholds, especially since it's a different thing every week.

Betty asks how she paid for all the crap, and Amanda totally explains that living with/off Betty has saved her such money that she's paid off a credit card, which she celebrated by running that mother right up again. Hilda whispers, "Where's the rent, bitch?" with a little shoulder gesture, but I'm so sure Betty would ever formulate the ability to say anything like that. You know the thing where you scrunch the paper off the straw and then drop water on it? That's what would happen to Betty if she ever said that. It would be like Jennifer Carpenter in *The Exorcism Of Emily Rose*. So Betty just stares passive-aggressively at Amanda, willing her to get something she's obviously not going to get, and finally Amanda's like, "Betty, *do not worry*." Betty relaxes just in time for the kicker: "I'm gonna catch up on my sleep at work, per yoozh." She takes off, and only Hilda looking at her with total douche chill disgust causes her to do anything but whine softly to herself while watching the pigeons through her window like Keir Dullea in *David & Lisa*, so she goes running after Amanda in her madwoman's reeds, tearing down the street like she's looking for the Omegahedron.

Amanda swears she'd like to give the crazy space witch some rent money, but turns out she's a bit short. Betty suggests returning the clothes and shit she just bought, and Amanda explains how you can't return sale items to any of the million stores she shopped at this morning. "You know I'm good for it!" she says, and Betty points out that no, she isn't, and we do know that. Betty whines about the creepy gross landlord who is "weird" and "leers," and points out that if (meaning when) she pays off their rent she'll be skint. "If you want to keep living with me, then you're gonna have to chip something in." Amanda *totally* gets it, and then *totally* asks Betty for subway money.

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Wilhelmina Slater, what are you doing? Hiding in a closet while Marc shadows Connor and reports back to her. Wili whine-reminds us about how she ("that remarkably well-preserved EIC") tried to bone him in Florida last week, and actually admits that she feels stupid and silly about it. Marc advises her to talk to him, and that's not going to be happening, and then gives her the whole *Eagle Eye* about ["Go! Now, go!"](#) and but then it turns around on them and Wili's stuck, so she strikes a weird non-casual pose and fully goes, "Top o' the morning to ya!" They are both horrified beyond belief.

Cut to Wili screaming bloody murder about WTF and Marc's like, "You should hear some of the things that come out of my mouth when I'm around him!" They talk about how perfect and totally awesome and ruthless and smart and business-minded and impeccable and large-handed he is for a good long while, and then Christina comes wobbling pointlessly in with her demon-bearing womb. Normally I would boo and hiss at her, but the slobbery Connor lovefest was getting a little weird, so it's like the suckiness becomes homeopathic and awful Christina is the iceberg that stops the boat from going where the dragons are. Why's she there? Why's she *ever* there is a more appropriate question.

In this specific case Christina exists to make Wili feel guilty about ignoring her stupid baby in its stupid Scottish baby-carrying device throughout the episode, starting now. The point is Wili's awesome response to Christina's request to come to her latest doctor's appointment: "Christina, I've got a lot on my mind at the moment. And one of the reasons I hired you as my surrogate was for the fierce independence of the Scottish people. Your entire country would be insulted if I held your hand at the doctor's office. You're our *Braveheart*." Marc unnecessarily chimes in with "Our *Braveuterus*." Connor comes in to ask for Wili's company at a Ralph Lauren marketing presentation, but she babbles and

babbles and babbles (*babbles*, I'm saying, like you never saw Wili babble) and eventually thrusts Christina at him like a crucifix, saying she has to go to the appointment with her surrogate. Marc giggles insanely at all the single *nontendres* ("It'd be great if we could do it together," "I'll fill you in when I get back") and just as you're thinking maybe it's best that Marc isn't so much in this episode, because he pretty much sucks this week, Wili blows your mind by striking another weird pose and "casually" calling Connor "Mate." As in "g'day." Again, everyone is horrified.

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Betty goes to Daniel to A) annoy him about how YETI starts next episode, of which he is very much aware due to how Betty does this every hour on the hour, and B) ask him for overtime so she can continue to subsidize Amanda's lifestyle instead of growing a pair. Daniel tells her that Meade's "eliminating overtime," in accordance with, um, the Made Up Laws addendum to the FLSA I guess. On the other hand, they're shifting some resources to the website (ModeNY.com) and want some pitches. I mean, Daniel says it in the cutest way about how we're "expanding our digital footprint" and need "lots of new content," and Betty would be perfect because she's "creative" in some undefined way. This all might seem very vague and undefined and *Ugly Betty*-esque, unless you're actually involved in online media and then it's more like *King Of The Hill*: not funny, because it's *all too real*. Like how people don't read *Dilbert* to laugh, they read *Dilbert* to remind themselves that somebody else gets it, and is making a documentary comic strip about it.

Molly shows up like she does apparently every day now, and Daniel acts all kooky and shoves Betty out the door and asks what's up. She says she's looking to "hit up all the rich jerks" Connor works with, and then awkwardly acts like she's surprised by how shitty that sounds, and she re-explains about how she has a yearly charity auction for her public school's programs, and even if Daniel's not a jerk, he's rich, so she wants money. Daniel offers to help, and Molly's funny: "That's awesome. Anyhow..." She basically asks him to replace Connor as her date to the auction tonight, because as usual Connor is working instead of being a good fiancé, and Daniel's all crushy-crushy about it, and frankly so is Molly, and they talk about how he loves kids and they are such good friends, and Wili sends her patronizing hate glances when she leaves. Even in a cubicle a world away, Claire smells the total sex coming off them both, and commences judging with all her heart. Which... Has Claire done anything post-Alexis that wasn't just repetitive naysaying and bitchery? Have they finally managed to make Claire a boring plot device? No, she was totally cool in her freaky outfit on the retreat, complaining about her phone and trying to get Daniel to marry Betty or whatever. So no, just usually. That's lame.

Christina talks about *och* this and *begorrah* that and whatever, the baby is a "bloody acrobat" and Wili is going "daft," based on her bizarre behavior earlier with Connor, and then stops playing her bagpipes long enough to eat Betty's entire meal of ganked sesame crackers. Betty is, pretty much, a bitch at this point: "Sure, [take them]. I haven't eaten since yesterday, but whatever." I would punch her in the face, what the eff is that. Christina's like "Bairn, didda nae tell ye tha' yuir apartment was too dear? And did ye nae say ye'd eat ramen? Has tha' gang aft agley?" Because Betty speaks Christina, she agrees that yes, she was prepared to scrimp in order to live in this apartment, but it's hard to subsist on ramen when Amanda is eating all your ramen. "And she denies it! She says there's an old crazy man who lives inside my walls and comes out at night to eat my food! She calls him [Bad Ronald](#)!" Amanda wins. Whatever it is, however it's judged: Amanda has won it.

Christina says more shit about the Earnshaws of the Grange and Betty bitches and moans about how her life is not worth living and how it just makes things *that much worse* when you do *nothing to change your own circumstances*. Christina talks about how she came to New York without two dimes to rub together, which is what Scotsmen do for fun, but she figured out other stuff to do, and it usually didn't cost her a cent. This is because -- as we know and will see again this week -- Christina's past is basically being a prostitute. But then, so's Betty: she marches that idea straight to the ModeNY pitch meeting -- after of course jacking some Betty bullshit up all over it so that it stops being a good or relevant idea and starts being something even Rachel Maddow would find dorky.

"As we all know, living in Manhattan can be expensive." Wili arches: "Really? I hadn't noticed." Daniel tells her not to be snotty, and she's like, "What? I honestly never noticed!" Which is pretty awesome. Betty continues: "*A Day In Manhattan On Zero Dollars*." I love how she came to this meeting with one idea. Just the one. Just one really great piece of content that will hover on the RSS feed for about three days. WTG UB LOL. "Most museums have one day a week where you can go for free, but the National American Indian Museum is free every day!" (This is where everybody in the room remembers that Betty kind of sucks, and wonders to themselves why they always forget this fact every episode and actually try to kick the football every episode and Betty always jerks it away at the last second but they keep thinking she's going to get cool and she never ever is going to get cool so really who is the fucker and who is the fuckee in this context?) "Its culturally sensitive and thought-provoking exhibits include pottery, basketry..." Amanda snores at her violently, and Betty smacks her, and they talk about how it sucks -- even Daniel's like, "it's a little *dry*, Betty" -- and she starts in with feeding the squirrels in Madison Square Park, and Marc makes fun of her, getting laughs he doesn't deserve. "Okay, well. Maybe Marc and Amanda have better ideas." Really, Betty? Better than the *thought-provoking basketry*?

Amanda immediately comes up with a thousand shameless Amanda-type things to do off the top of her head, because she's a cockroach of celebrity and a total hero: crashing a Tom Cruise premiere ("He is super short! But the food at the afterparty was beyond!") and Betty tries to whine that "the average *Mode* reader can't do that, and Amanda fully goes, "You would be surprised what you can get away with!" ♥. The editors and execs of the round table love this, and want to hear more. "Like I haven't paid for a drink or a meal in years. I have a bar tab of like, ten grand...." Connor and Wili are all over it, and Wili names the article *How I Blew Ten Grand Without Actually Spending A Dime* and Daniel congratulates Betty and Amanda on their first sale. "Ow!" Amanda cat-squeals. "My first sale at *Mode*! That was easy." Instead of seeing that Amanda has powerful Zen magics on her side and sometimes you have to cop a ride on the [Serena](#) Lazy River and just Be, of course, Betty decides to do some more limp whining to people who don't care.

Betty calls Hilda in Flushing, but can only get the actual noteworthy part -- how she just made a professional sale -- out before her family rightfully begins to congratulate her. Ignacio and Justin get on extensions, and they're all totally excited for her, but of course Betty *will not have this*, so she explains to them about how the cruel, cruel world of editors and people who are not terminally boring has once again conspired to do their best to help her redeem her own cluelessness. "All I did was a pitch a shitty article about thought-provoking basketry and they tried to make it salable as a favor to me! I blame

Amanda!" They ask her what the fucking problem is, and she can't quite figure it out, so she just repeats herself a few more times while they tell her to stop manufacturing drama and actually do her best like we always thought she was doing.

"Okay, let's grip it and rip it," says Amanda, which is amazing on many levels because it means so many things. Grooming and depilation, Amanda's predilection for use-once-and-dispose catchphrases, the floating violent/intimate signifiers, band-aid gumption, it's all Amanda and it's all right there. Betty says before they grip or rip, they need two rules: "One: nothing illegal, Two: we can only do things that normal *Mode* readers can do." Amanda creates on-the-fly hand signals for both rules: "Got it. No crimes, real peeps. Saddle up."

Meanwhile, Daniel's asking Claire which of the two unflattering ties he's holding will be more flattering, and she toys with him for awhile before pointing out that he's essentially dating somebody else's girl, and that Molly is into him. He goes all soft and sweet about that, so she slaps the shit out of him several times and reminds him that their entire family has been torn apart multiple times by just this kind of slutting around, and makes him promise not to screw around with Molly. He tries to tell her it's not a date, and she tells him exactly how this fundraiser is going down: "And she'll look stunning, and the booze will be flowing, and given your weakness for having sex in public places..." He whines that it was one time, and not public *flagrante* until they unexpectedly moved the truck he was boning behind, and she's like, whatever. The Meades are not like us in many ways, but their ongoing comfort with discussing each other's sex lives is one of the biggies. "A nothing moment can turn into something huge. Just stay away, and write her a big check." His mouth says yes but his eyes say "No way."

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After their appointment, Christina brogues about the baby and rugby for awhile, and Wili doesn't want to know the sex of the baby, and then Marc calls to say that "the Thunder from Down Under" won't quit asking for her, so Wili babbles about how he should just say she got hit by a cab and won't be returning. Scared of going back to the office, Wili invites Christina out for a drink in the middle of the day. "I'm *seven months pregnant with your child*," Christina reminds her, but Wili says she's quite capable of drinking for all three of them.

Betty watches in amazement as Amanda works a counter girl into giving her about \$800 worth of cosmetics samples, and Betty tries to find a way to feel guilty and disgusting about it. "Betty, it's fine. Don't you ever get free samples of ice cream?" Betty says yes, but then she buys some ice cream. "Hmm. Of course you do," Amanda says, managing to insult her in about six awesome ways, and then drags Betty off to a clothing boutique.

"Fun fact: most stores have a 30-day return policy. So you tuck the tag, wear 'em once, bring it back." Betty points out that it's both illegal and immoral, which breaks Rule One. "Remember number two? Real *Mode* readers. Is it fair that only Ivanka Trump gets to wear dresses like this? Shouldn't frumpy girls from Queens get to feel glamorous, too? Isn't that what this article is all about?" And while you should never try to argue Betty into thinking she deserves anything nice, ever, because you will always come up against Betty's innate self-hatred, Betty is momentarily confused by this logic. Amanda presses her advantage by rubbing a cashmere scarf all over Betty's face, and once again Betty's guilt goes TILT. "Wouldn't you love to wear it... Just once?" Her kooky smile and whirling hypnotism eyeballs work their magic, and it's on to the next thing.

"Every week, the *Village Voice* lists all the gallery openings in Chelsea. I always pick the ones with the ugliest art, because they have the best booze. They figure the drunker you are, the more likely you are to actually buy all this crap." Betty smokes another flute of champagne, and allows as how the stupid installation art (broken bicycles in stupid piles) is "really neat," so Amanda takes away her champagne and downs it. "Are you hungry? Because I just spotted dinner." She waves at a couple of freaky Eurotrash confidence men and hisses, "Tuck your tag. Tuck it!" They go talk to the dudes, and Amanda works her magic.

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"I couldn't help but notice you looking at us -- and by *us* I mean *me*." They act all creepy and sketchy, and ask if the girls are enjoying the art. "Well, I wasn't... Until I spotted the two best-looking pieces here!" Betty does a great abnegation of this train of thought, all, "Okay, we out," but Amanda jerks her back in line. Betty admits to the Euros that she likes this one piece, and the guy is like, "What a coincidence! I just buy this one!" (Translation: "I will leave your raped corpse in Central Park to be discovered by joggers.") They talk about going to dinner, and Betty tries desperately to find a way this is evil, so Amanda pulls her off to the side for yet another talking-to. Betty points out that they are obviously serial killers, and Amanda goes all purring and awesome: "Betty, if we're gonna write this article, we have to live it. That means everything: Fun, art, fashion, sex." Betty says there isn't going to be any of the latter, and Amanda whispers, "*Isn't there?*" again. It's again awesome. She big-sister guilts Betty about how they're partners and Betty is a writer and they have to work together, and Betty's like, "Fine. Let's grip it and rip it." Amanda is appalled.

Och. The sound of clinking ice cubes, it's like a Scottish lullaby!" Wili toasts the bundle of whatever, and Christina calls bullshit finally. "You haven't even given a second's thought to raising this baby, other than its stake in the Meade empire." Christina, and didn't we always kind of know this, is one of the people who acts just as drunk as the people she's with, even sober. She points around Wili's living room at all the dangerous pointy electrocutey things: "Dead baby! Dead baby! Dead baby!" They talk about whether Wili even wants the baby, and she points out how Wili didn't even want to go to the appointment until Connor showed up and she commenced acting weird and dumb. Because it's Christina it takes twice as long as a normal person, but she eventually figures out that Wili has a crush on him.

Wili launches into another iteration of the Why Connor Is Perfect For Me speech, and ends on a sad note: "I finally meet the perfect man, and I can't have him. I may as well just resign myself to never having a man around." (Also sad: Wili says for the first of multiple times that her real fear about the Meade Child is how bad she fucked up her daughter, and how she doesn't want to make the same mistake twice.) Christina says now is not the time to swearing off men, because the baby is a boy. Wili feels a sudden happiness as the baby turns real inside her mind, but clamps down on that shit faster than you can say "family history of arson."

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At dinner, Amanda regales the Euros with the story of Betty's [motorcycle ride](#) into the *Player* jell-o, and even Betty feels stronger and prettier and funnier when Amanda's telling the story. They all round-table about how "expensive" their champagne tastes, whatever that means, and Amanda flirts with one of them (Claudio), and finally Betty excuses herself so she can find a way to fuck this up for herself in private.

"I'm having a crisis!" she yells at Hilda, who knows better than most of us that Betty's crises are just like regular crises, except for how they never exist. "I've been drinking the most incredible champagne, and I can't enjoy it! All I'm thinking about is how much Claudio and Luka spent on it!" Hilda rolls up her sleeves and attempts to wade through Betty's BS, asking if the Euros are having fun -- yes -- and whether they're expecting some poon after dinner. "No, no, no. If they are, then they're gonna be disappointed. ...Well, at least one of them will." Way to simultaneously over- and underestimate Amanda, Suarez. "So these two guys with money take you out to a fabulous dinner, everybody's having a great time, and you're feeling guilty... Because?" Betty doesn't know, because Betty never knows why she is so dedicated to ruining everything cool.

"Betty, you deserve to have fun more than anybody I know. You spend every dime you make to live in the city, but you don't *live in the city*. Trust me, all your problems are gonna be there tomorrow." Like a snuggly blanket of depression. Betty promises to try and have fun... Which guarantees something horrible is going to happen. I can't really blame Betty for assuming any pleasure will ultimately lead to her shame and downfall, because she's been watching this show as long as we have and knows that it's empirical fact.

Luka and Claudio are gone when she gets back to the table, and Amanda's all, "They're making business calls, so I got another bottle, which they won't care about because they are, like, international financiers or something." Betty then makes the fatal mistake of saying that, although she was dubious about the shared assignment, she is turning out to be really enjoying herself, and thanks Amanda for making her life interesting, and they are totally happy and in love with their relationship for about two seconds, which is of course just long enough for it all to come crashing down. The waiter brings them the check and says, of course, that Claudio and Luka have ditched them with it. "And I never even saw it coming!" Amanda exclaims: "They're *good*." She's impressed.

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Betty wigs and wigs, and Amanda points out that they've managed to finally hit their target number. "High five!" she says, and then tells Betty they're going to have to dine and dash. "No! You can't just walk out on the bill, that's illegal." Once again, Amanda awesomely does the, "Is it? *Is it really?*?" and Betty shuts her down. Betty massages her migraine until the waiter returns with a pitying look... And then comes up with a solution. That's my girl. "Can I talk to your manager?"

Molly comes into Daniel's office to A) needle him for backing out on their date, and B) to get his rich jerk money. She's ravenous and has a bit of his sweet-and-sour takeout, joking that if he really feels guilty for standing her up he should just write a bigger check. He tells her to use a fork, she laughs about how she's a master of chopsticks, and then immediately drops a piece of chicken on her white gown. "*Damn*," she growls hilariously, and then freaks out for a second deciding to just wear the stained dress as-is. "I'm a kindergarten teacher. I'm always covered in paint, paste and puke anyway." He drags her off to the closet so they can play Platonic dress-up.

Betty lays down the charm on the restaurant manager, introducing herself and Amanda as *Mode* profilers. The lady's dubious about Betty working at *Mode*, being that she's wearing a Conehead idea of what constitutes clothing, but Amanda assures her that Betty's in disguise. "ModeNY.com is dedicated to celebrating the most hip, edgy, ahead-of-the curve things in New York City, and we'll be featuring you prominently this month." Betty

confidently hands the check back to the manager, there's an absurdly long stress-silence with dripping beads of sweat and the battle of wills and the whole nine, and then the lady takes their check off their hands.

Outside, Amanda crows with wonder about how unbelievably awesome that was. And yes, it was. Betty's like, "And we're going to promote the heck out of them in our article for sure!" Amanda doesn't care, just tells Betty that she kicked ass, nearly mauling her in excitement. Betty asks to go home, and Amanda allows it because how do you top that, but then because they allowed themselves to be happy for one second, of course, Amanda's wallet turns up missing. Betty screams "NO!" in an awesome way, and starts yelling about the Euros, but there's more: Amanda, in an attempt to assuage Betty's irritation, took it upon herself to pay the creepy scary landlord on Betty's behalf, and now Betty's rent money has also been stolen. Betty begins to wig.

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Amanda says they can just go to an ATM, but Betty explains for the eightieth time that she is skint and has no more money. "I can't pay my rent this month!" she screams to the sky, and Amanda shrugs. "We'll pay the rent next month. What are they gonna do, kick us out?" Betty, having finally had it, is like, "AMANDA. REALITY." She starts to go off about how this was a bad idea, and then changes her tune to more about how Amanda, the house-sharing, and their entire lives are the bad idea. "It's not just tonight, Amanda. It's everything. You really don't take responsibility for anything, do you? Not when you run up my bills, or let your dog pee on my clothes, or eat all my food..." Amanda blames Bad Ronald, and Betty screams amazingly, "There is no Bad Ronald! It's you! Bad Amanda!" She storms off, and Amanda feels the tender shoots of a sadness feeling pushing up into her garden.

Having fled to Queens and the incompetent arms of her father, Betty whines and screams and screeches, and he reminds her she'll never be homeless really, and she complains about how she let herself "get sucked into Amanda's black hole of irresponsibility," and then of all things, Ignacio becomes awesome. "Don't be so hard on yourself. Or her. She didn't mean for the money to be stolen." Betty says that Amanda's MO is doing horribly destructive things without meaning to do them, and this is but one example, and it all stems from how she's never had to work hard for anything. She thinks life is one big night on the town, but it's not. Life is hard!" Ignacio explains The Thing About Betty, which is that while she was raised to work hard and be responsible, it's also the suckiest thing about her, because she has inhuman expectations of herself and everyone else, and manages to focus on the ideas and self-image of perfection rather than actually living her life. Betty's not feeling this, because it's her entire personality, so he just tells her to get her ass back to Manhattan and learn the things Amanda has to teach her.

Wili drunkenly suggests naming the baby Abelard, and Christina, full of mocktail faux-drunkness, disses Abelard and suggests Hamish. Neither of these people should be naming babies. Wili scoffs that they might as well name him Angus, and Christina remembers a "lovely tussle in the hay" with an Angus once, which Wili finds adorable because she is drunk. She explains that she wasn't avoiding the gender of the baby out of any kind of reason other than wanting to pretend the baby is hypothetical because once it becomes real then she will have to think about how bad she fucked up her daughter and the relationship with her daughter. "Well hey, you've been given another chance. Just don't do anything stupid, like naming him Abelard." Christina, when you're right you're right. Full points. Daniel calls for closet permission to get something for a size six, and Christina tells

him to look in a particular area, and Wili's like "Um, Daniel is not a size six," and Christina spills about how he's now dressing Connor's fiancée Molly. Wili is intrigued.

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Molly calls Daniel her "fairy godmother" and he squeaks that no, he's just the boss. She changes out of her virginal white dress into a sexy red number, and he loves her in it. "Just don't let the paparazzi take photos of you in that dress. That's supposed to be our March cover." She shivers thinking about how much it costs, and he's like, "Well? Are you planning on eating with chopsticks tonight?" They both think about how beautiful she is, for such a boring girl, and almost kiss, but then she runs off like Cinderella. He commences being wet-eyed and gape-mouthed as always; and as always, it is fetching.

Betty gives Daniel her story, and he loves it. "What if the restaurant manager hadn't comped your meal," he wonders editorially, and Betty's like, "She would have realized I was trying to pay with my Queens College student ID?" He raves about it for awhile, and says they seemed to have had a blast. "We did. We did... In a sleazy, scammy sort of way. I guess I have Amanda to thank for that..." Ugh, Betty. He offers their partnership a regular feature on the site: "Think about it! You and Amanda, out on the town every week, having some new kind of crazy adventure? You have a great dynamic!" So true. Added bonus: what if it really upsets Christina?! I like her with Wili more anyway. Daniel offers her an advance for the rent issues, and she does a flip in the air like a circus poodle, and runs off to tell Amanda their woes are gone for now.

The girl at Amanda's desk is hilarious, like a snotty Amanda clone who totally ignores Betty and she's like, "I don't know where the fuck Amanda is." Betty spots Amanda skulking away, and finds her in a fast food costume ("Don't look at me! *I'm a freak!*"). Amanda has realized that their problems this week are somewhat Betty's fault, but mostly hers: "I dunno, I would say it was more like... 70/40 me." Betty doesn't even aim for the pitch, so sincere is Amanda being. "The thing is, you're right. I should care more about what's important to you... Like paying my half of the rent." She takes off, and Betty blurts, "I had fun!" Amanda stops. "Last night, I had fun. I've been working so hard to pay for my fabulous single life in Manhattan, but I haven't really lived it... Until you forced me to go out last night and have fun, and I did, so... Thank you." Amanda is gracious, and then admits she had a great time too. Man, this is the best thing this show ever did. I love this story so much. Betty tells her about the article and regular feature, and the rent getting paid, but makes it clear to Amanda that she's keeping her second job for the time being.

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This episode's shitty version of Marc brings Wili last night's Closet security tape, and giggles and wiggles about the mysterious "things" he had to do to get it. Wili doesn't care. Frankly, this Marc I do not like much so I don't care, and anyway unless it involves spending the rest of his life making it up to Cliff, I don't really care either way. It's been a few weeks and I'm still grappling with the idea that this show is not, and never was at any point, actually about Cliff. I simply cannot wrap my head around that on this fundamental level. Marc waits for Daniel to shuck some clothes and show off that sick body, but no. Just the endless longing. "Stop it. Freeze. You see the way Daniel's looking at her? The way Betty looks at a cheeseburger. I've been looking for the wedge to drive between Connor and that sweet little schoolmarm, and Daniel has just given it to me: He's falling in love with her. And I'm back in the game."

It's funny, because they've never really obscured this storyline from us: pretty much told us from the second Molly showed up how this was going down. And I feel like I should be bothered by the fact that Wili's corporate scheming has been replaced by this bizarre Every Weird Girl Thing At Once application of her evil skills: the baby-wanting, the husband-wanting, the feeling-having, the Having It All of it all... But no. It rings true, and she's doing all of these nutty things completely in character. And frankly, the time for considering *Baby Boom* in a feminist context is pretty much over, because we've explored it so thoroughly in our entertainment and our lives that now it's just: a thing that happens. Remember the Mommy Wars and how the job-havers and the home-makers complacently bitched about each other and condescended to each other and acted like assholes? Doesn't that feel kind of archaic to you now? The evolution of culture is punctuated not with shouts and murmurs, but with blessed silence. The fact that we can finally talk about career/children without screaming or getting militant -- or tossing absurd generalizations at it -- is a greater sign of our growth as a people than any manifesto: when the fight stops, the world starts up again. We all turn back into just people.

Amanda comes home to a lovely dinner, courtesy of Betty. "What's all this business?" she asks, and Betty says that after a long day of hard work (at two jobs yet!), she thought Amanda would be hungry and tired. I love how their solution is to just legitimize Betty's constant nurturing of Amanda by converting them to a working couple. "I'm going to be cooking and cleaning up for you anyway, you might as well earn it." She gives her a wallet from Hilda's boutique as well and Amanda is totally touched. "You know, because yours got stolen, and you need somewhere to keep your rent money." Amanda is agog: "Betty, this is *Prada*." Betty corrects her -- it's PLADA -- and then Amanda's voice does that amazingly touching break it does when she says thank you, and they sit down to eat, and they are a little family.

ELLE IN A HANDBASKET

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 11 | Aired on 01.08.2009

Dress For Success - Betty continues to miss more social cues than a Martian while being emotionally abused by her father, sister, friends, and boss. Oh, and Wilhelmina introduces the editorial staff to the time-honored tradition of the [wife swap](#).

Q: How do you make Nikki Blonsky look even more like a diabetic video blogger getting airlifted out of her ailurophilic trailer home than she already did?

A: Big old pink stripe in her big stupid racist vagina-kicking hair. I'm sorry, but she looks like those apples they used to sell at roadside stands that have slowly dried until they look like bloated grandmother caricatures of, in this case, Kathy Najimy.

Q: Who's that wizened weirdo wandering the set of *Ugly Betty* this week?

A: That's what used to be Bernadette Peters. She was a Broadway legend who was eventually turned into a robot as a joke by Andy Kaufman and now that he's dead (or is he?) she just sort of cameos around. Here she is playing, loosely and through a briny boozy pickle of nonchalance, the role of Betty's YETI advisor and hopefully future mentor.

Q: What is Christina talking about?

A: What is Christina *ever* talking about? She's beautiful and she's been pregnant longer than Ashlee Simpson was with little Mohican Mohinder Mekalekahimekahineyho, and that's all that matters until somebody summons the nuts to shove her down the stairs again.

Q: You know how sometimes with this show, you realize early on that you're really just going to have to sit there and wait the full forty-five for the episode-ending montage? And you wish that you had figured that shit out later than the first act, because knowing it that early just makes it seem that much longer and stupider?

A: If I didn't, I sure do now! But yeah, I do.

Q: So what actually happened this week?

A: Oh, you know the plotline in *Prada* where hottentottie Adrian Grenier whines and whines with his thumb up his ass and then makes, like, a grilled cheese or a cupcake or like a waffle or something and is like, "If you choose your actual career over my pants-shitting tantrum, you don't get this waffle?" It's like that, pretty much the entire episode: either you do your job like a grownup individual, or you throw your phone in a Parisian fountain and go home to Adrian Grenier's waffles. A choice we each must make for ourselves at some point.

See, Betty is so busy having a *life* and doing her *job* that she forgets to... Not really sure. Something about Hilda's stupid beauty salon in their living room and how Betty has to be standing there while this happens. Not doing anything, mind you, just standing there and ignoring her own shit. Or else she gets no waffle. But then, we *all* get the waffle in a way, with like strawberries provided by a unicorn delivery service, when Ignacio's horrible ass keels over with a heart attack. Probably in the middle of giving some goddamned speech about how fucking worthless Betty is, and that's what "family" means. I know he's not actually going to die, but it still smells like delicious waffle in here.

Q: What about the clothes?

A: Well, Marc is adorable as usual. Even though he and Daniel have sort of floofy hair all

night, and he's wearing a green velvet suit not unlike that one worn by the guy that won't let Dorothy into the Emerald City until she rings the bell or whatever, he looks good. Christina is, as usual, gorgeous; Betty's clothes are edging up on hipster awesome but it won't last. Molly still looks outdoorsy no matter how much lipstick you slap on her, Hilda's ass is on fire but her face is sort of haggard, and Wili's wearing something you might see on [Serena van der Woodsen](#) or the Visionaries line of holographic man-toys from the '80s where each character had a hologram of their spirit animal right on the front of their shit. Also Connor, she is wearing Connor attached to her face, because Molly broke up with him, because Daniel got all up on her jock, because Wili told him to. So everybody wins, except for Zac Posen, who is denied some of that thunder from Down Under but is, as usual, adorable. Even with a fake tan, and even if he still always manages to talk like he's got ten dicks in him.

Q:And the actual plot?

A: Ugh. Bernadette Peters notes correctly that Betty Suarez has no social skills, yells at her to get some, is brutally rebuffed, and threatens to kick Betty out of YETI. (Which is all eerily similar to this old [Gilmore Girls](#) episode I watched today, where they give Rory the same business.) Betty enlists Marc to teach her networking, runs into Nikki Blonsky and manages to avoid getting kicked in the vagina by Nikki Blonsky, then gets kicked in the *metaphorical* vagina when Nikki Blonsky steals this Halston dress for an *Elle* cover shoot, and then they get the dress back and go to a party at Wili's house, where Bernadette Peters babbles about shrimp and then wanders away in the middle of a line, because she is nuts.

Instead of being rude and answering screeching Hilda's nineteen thousandth guilt-tripping phone call, Betty behaves in a mature and professional manner. Of course, this means she must be destroyed, so when she finally shows up in Queens everybody's missing, because Ignacio had a heart attack, because Betty wasn't there, because somebody up there loves me.

See the [soapiest moments](#) on the show, and come back on Monday for the full weecap of the episode.

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

Betty is very excited about Jodie Papadakis, who's the editor running YETI, and her family is being their usual amount of eye-rollingly, numb-faced supportive. Given that Betty in all likelihood has been yapping repetitively about Jodie Papadakis since the advent of the Tamagotchi, I can barely blame them. The rest of the Suarezes are busy uglifying their home in celebration of Hilda's home boutique with streamers and those shiny letters with grommets all over the place. Justin is wearing purple pants and a shirt in a print Dorothy Szbornak would find a little grim, Ignacio is standing around shooting judgment eyebrows at anything that will stand still, and Hilda could not give less of a fuck about Betty's life than ever. She's very off-the-shoulder right now, while Betty is wearing a collision of knits and a Minnie Mouse polka-dot bow at her neck.

Apparently Jodie is Betty's number one freakout famous hero, which caused her to scream in her building's hallway so loudly that an old woman slapped her. However, she's not so terribly excited about meeting Jodie that she would do anything as logical as attend the pre-YETI mixer, choosing instead to stand around talking about Jodie while Hilda decorates the house and thinks about hiring a magician for her opening. Justin whines that he's trying really hard to get the "Bridge & Tunnel" out of their family -- which is a war he lost long

ago, and keeps losing -- and Betty's like, "This is too depressing to contemplate, so I'm going to keep talking about Jodie." Ignacio literally goes, "Betty, your sister asked you a question," as though that's not ten times ruder than ignoring the question in the first place, especially considering the question was "Should I hire a magician for the opening of my trashy living room boutique salon and candle shoppe?"

Betty's like, "Whatever, how about gift bags?" Hilda yells at her that she can't afford gift bags, because she spent all her money on "merch," and Betty's like, "Except for how I get free shit from my job, which is mostly about free shit." The fact that Hilda feels driven to explain what "merch" is short for should clue you into the fact that this is one of those episodes where the jokes -- and the impossibly anvil-icious and poorly constructed moral of the tale -- don't come fast and hard, but instead float lazily toward you from a million miles away, in the early '90s.

Which sucks, because I really like the woman that wrote this episode as a writer, and it feels a little messed-with, to be honest. A little tainted by someone or several someones from the ranks of the clueless not-so-hip. A little Bridge & Tunnel, a little Off-Off-Off. Bernadette Peters? Nikki Blonsky? A Tom Wolfe reference? A complete dearth of the sparkling, wisecracking dialogue that once characterized this show, in favor of hoary old Catskills routines and a bludgeoning ancient message about the hazards of having women in the workplace, neglecting their family and all-important fathers' decrees in order to walk around in pants and operate in a business setting? Seriously. This script was obviously stolen and marked up by aging, uncool drag queens. Who apparently can operate a time machine even with those long fake nails.

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Anyway. Hilda calls this part her "very own Broadway opening," and Ignacio... Okay, this is what I'm talking about. He says it's going to be like "*Spring Awakening*, *Avenue Q*, and *South Pacific* all rolled into one." And I'm not saying I wouldn't like to see that production, but even with my hatred and ignorance of Broadway musicals I know that makes zero fucking sense, because *really* what he just said is, "It'll be like [*three Broadway musicals you may have heard of, picked out of a hat at random*], all rolled into one." Which, I don't know if you know this, but gay people watch this show, and many of them actually know about Broadway musicals, and many of them are occasionally able to discern when you're pandering. Especially when you do it in a way that suggests you've been hit in the head by a cast-iron frying pan that once belonged to John Wells.

We have got to get out of this scene, I agree. I'm just having trouble doing that, because the whole episode is like this, just like: soft joke from *The Cosby Show* school of "humor" leading into a *non sequitur* fashion reference from 1996 and then some kind of over the top slapsticky Christina shit, and then repeat. And it pisses me off because this season has been more like that than not, and we're halfway through the season at this point. At least boring old Season Two didn't feel like it was written by two old queens wearing elastic-waisted Mom Jeans in a trailer park somewhere upstate. This season -- with several wonderful exceptions but not nearly enough -- has felt like somebody's *idea* of what this show is like, rather than being the actual show. Which is sad, because I liked it once.

Anyway, to Manhattan, where Daniel is complaining about *Elle*'s sales win for last issue -- perhaps, he says, it was the classy photo of Sarah Silverman on the toilet, because being outraged by Sarah Silverman is soooo 2009, and meanwhile here's what everybody's

wearing: Betty looks presentable-ish in a skirt of many colors in the red family, Marc looks stunning in a black suit, patterned grey shirt and neon pink tie, and Amanda looks sort of understated in some Express Editor-looking pants, a stupid plaidlike vest, and a gold-dipped Bluetooth. Marc and Mandy remind us about how Marc was once an intern at *Elle*, and Betty shushes them. Wili tells the assembled staffers that if *Elle* wins again, one of them will die; Daniel offers them a bottle of great wine if they get any scoop on *Elle*'s plans for next month.

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Connor tosses some of that charm at them both after the meeting, appealing in a sort-of threesome-y way that he likes their Good Cop/Bad Cop routine. Daniel says it's not a routine, it's just that he's "nice" and Wili is mean. Wili responds, and thank God for her, that you could also say she has balls Daniel is lacking, and Connor randomly goes "God, I love this woman," so you remember the other thing you need to know coming back from the break, which is that Wili has a crush on Connor and wants to exploit Daniel's crush on Connor's fiancée Molly. And that's... literally all you need to know at this point, because that's how boring this show is now. Wili shivers and giggles and Daniel's grossed out/jealous; she invites Connor to her house on Saturday for a party, and he says he's bringing Molly even though she's got something going on with her own life.

There's a never-seen Halston original that Daniel's borrowing from a collector for Keira Knightley to wear on the next cover, which will do wonders for advertising in that month's issue. Betty does a "Go Daniel, It's Your Birthday" dance and he's like, "We talked about that." (Really? Did you talk about it back in 1992, when Martin Lawrence and Tisha Campbell's love seemed untarnishable? Maybe next Betty can *woof-woof* for the boys in the Dog Pound, or show us all the meaning of twenty-three skidoo. Thank God America Forever is adorable, or I would have stopped watching right about now.) They talk about how Betty's going to be picking up the dress herself, in secret, like an international spy.

Wili snags Daniel and shows him the video of him kissing Molly in the closet; he goes, "You're awful" in this sort of wounded sad voice. She gives him the only copy, and they discuss how it needs to stay quiet, but some things are worth the risk, and then Wili sort of explains to Daniel that he is in love with her. She floats the possibility that Molly is into it, despite her protestations to the contrary, and apparently that's how dumb Daniel is now, so he's going to totally skeeve his way into Molly and Connor's impending relationship.

Marc takes a good long time figuring out how this whole scheme-that-is-not works, because he's dumb this week too. Wili protests the entire time that she only has Daniel's best interests in mind, because she's such a good person or whatever, which makes no sense because you're also totally trying to wreck somebody's relationship so obviously you have a personal stake, but eventually Marc pulls it together and realizes this is about snagging Connor.

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In yet another goddamn scene without Amanda, Christina presents Betty with a stupid Montblanc the size of a Ren Faire turkey leg on a stand that says "BETTY SUAREZ, Young Editor In Training." YEIT. Then they talk, but as usual I have no idea what the fuck Christina is talking about. She yells at a dress form for awhile and then pregoes around and rolls her Rs and talks about a rodent in her pants or her womb or something and then breaks down

crying and I think mumbles something about that guy from *Flipping Out*, and then says she wishes she could be an alcoholic like Hilda but she can't because she's pregnant or something, and cries hysterically for awhile because her hormones can't handle their internet service being interrupted, and then for no narrative reason Betty tells her to go be at Hilda's stupid tacky party and if you think that story's going somewhere, that means you're lucky enough to still have places in your heart that haven't been burned and salted by this show yet.

Off Betty's line that her whole life is beginning today or whatever the fuck this simulacrum of Betty would say, Bernadette Peters is all, "Welcome to the funeral" because print media is dying, have you noticed, and then during the rest of this scene *Radar* fails eleven more times, and there's a pile of tics on the floor beside Bernadette Peters that grows exponentially as she burns through every possible weird/stupid thing she can do for a paycheck and then leaves them on the floor like grimacing unreal pistachio shells. She tells them to toughen up, just like when she came to NYC acting like this and was justly mocked for it. Betty softly declares her love for Jodie, which gets her shit on by Jodie for talking, and then Jodie makes Marc name five YETIs and their magazines. He does so easily, and then it's Betty's turn. But Betty wasn't at the mixer, so she stumbles all over and basically wets herself, because I don't know if you know this, but Betty Suarez has a congenital lack of game.

Jodie asks WTF she was doing instead of going to the mixer, and when Betty explains that she had to watch her tacky family stick tacky crap to the tacky walls of their tacky life, Jodie's like, "Anybody else miss the mixer? Sick hamster, perhaps?" Which is awesome and exactly what I hoped she would say. Of course, everybody else understands the concept of applying yourself to achieve your goals, and the importance of other people in this pursuit, so they were all there. Jodie, probably applying some stupid Tough Love principle we'll eventually have telegraphed and eventually revealed to us long after it has decayed, tells them to make forty professional contacts before the next class, or they're out of YETI. What she really means is, "Fucking give me a break, Suarez."

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Betty runs into Connor in the elevator, and of course he knows Jodie, and knows very well that Jodie's a hard ass, and Betty whines about the whole networking thing -- "she was a little unfair to me," she says -- and Connor's like, "Yeah, it's sad how you can't be a success in a vacuum without ever meeting people or forging connections of any kind, and aren't you so put upon," and then goes for the bonus by talking about how sometimes you just have to fuck your family and loved ones over because that's the way the cookie crumbles, the unspoken "And apart from macking on Daniel, Molly doesn't seem to mind" hangs between them in the air. Then, to shut her up, Connor tells Betty to find somebody who excels at "the shallow stuff," and get their help.

Ugh. This show's usually a bit more even-handed in its portrayal of Losers vs. Popular Kids, but this is ridiculous. The "shallow" stuff? Such as making friends and learning to understand other people? Meeting people in your industry? It's not a fucking chore, it's basic shit. So now you've got what could have been a fairly interesting episode about watching people who get it trying to explain it to Betty who doesn't, in a way that gets past her automatic nerd arrogance and leading to greater self-esteem once she realizes how easy to like other people actually are... But instead, you have confirmed heartless Bad

Boyfriend Connor explaining that being good at your job is a good thing, but that being good at your job also involves doing horrible things. Such as your job.

Of course, "shallow" means Marc, who shuts her down immediately in his amazing patchy couture jacket, and blackmails him to help her network with how she leveraged her affirmative action to get him into YETI. He says they can go to Swill for her forty contacts, but the offer's for tonight only. Betty calls Hilda to say she can't help her assemble the gift bags for the party on Saturday, and Hilda acts uncharacteristically whiny about it and hangs up, and Ignacio tells Hilda that her sister has no choice. *Which is true.* And what's more true is, *Betty thought of the motherfucking gift bags in the first place, and got them for you for free,* not to mention that *your son was born to assemble gift bags and he is standing right there.*

Daniel and Molly babble at each other for whatever reason, and act all awkward about the kissing thing, and she stands around lobbing ellipses at him long enough for Connor to arrive and whisk her away to somewhere stupid. Wiley Watching Wili shoots Daniel her most beautiful, caring and nurturing (yes!) smile, and they have a little convo about the nothing that just happened. She tells him to occupy Molly at her party under the guise of more helpful advice, and Daniel is grateful to the alien that has taken up residence inside Wilhelmina because it's so gosh-darn sweet.

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Now, we confirm at the end of the episode that Daniel's totally onto her, but it's almost worse that he is behaving like this even though he knows she's after Connor, because it makes Wili the fool for thinking she's fooling and manipulating Daniel (and Marc the fool for falling for it on his own). And of the three of them, you know I love Daniel, but of the three of them: he is the fool, in every scenario you can construct. Strike four, show, and Blonsky hasn't even *shown up* yet. Although judging by the chicken wing/ranch dressing scent wafting from my TV, she's getting closer.

Betty's first networking conquest: Ryan Richards, of The Gorgeous Gourmet. Not actually in the magazine industry -- or gorgeous, for that matter -- but the fact that Betty didn't immediately gun him down for not meeting her intellectual standards is a good sign that Betty's learning the basics. The basics of *meeting other human beings*. He hungrily reads her business card while Marc and Amanda dress her down viciously for spending twenty minutes on a caterer, but like: she's an assistant who throws about sixteen parties an episode, usually in the ten minutes before Wili starts shooting into the crowd, and he more than likely has a roster of entertainment and magazine clients already, so I'm not sure I understand why he's a bad contact. I mean, he might not count for this game, but -- and at least the episode follows up on this one thing -- that's a good card to have in your wallet. Even if it's just to whip it out during a conversation with somebody else and they're all "My caterer just cancelled," and you go like, "Call this guy, he's great." So even the episode is unclear on what "networking" actually means, which is just so great because we were already *doing* something stupid.

Marc explains that in this episode, "networking" means "acting retardedly fake while finding out what other magazines are doing right this second, in return for meaningless, made up gossip." The screen splits like mitosis and shows him doing this, but it's too stupid to tell you about, frankly, and basically you just: say your name, tell a huge stupid lie, then hamfistedly ask people about their secret stuff. So now you know what that's like when people say the word "networking." Oh, and then you tell them you'll be right back and walk

away from their face while they're still talking. And that's how you succeed in business! Amanda's ghost like Swayze because she knows when to get the fuck out of a shitty episode, but Marc waits around for a sec so he can stupidly set up this whole [Terminator](#)-style eye-menu where Betty assesses the people and decides if they're worth meeting, then approaches them, and it's just so awful because I guarantee you that based on its context, this is not a reference to the show, but to the first or second movie. I'm pretty sure Dwayne Wayne or the Fresh Prince or Fred Mertz did this at some point, and now Betty's doing it. I sort of hate this show, come to think of it. Although you do get to see cute little Betty plop down in a chair and brightly say, "I know a murderer!"

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Anyway, guess what? After a big dumb montage of her telling stupid lies to scary people that all look like they got Hepatitis C from their Botox surgeries, she's at 39 contacts. Stupid fucking Nikki Blonsky sits down beside her in a sassy Lane Bryant ensemble and a nasty-ass McKibbin-esque pink stripe in her stupid hair. And you know where McKibbin is now? Living in the *Sober House* with Andy Dick, which is the place we all go to die. I think you understand what I'm saying.

Anyway, Betty and Nikki are like, "We're fat and rude and we hate ourselves and other people, so obviously we are going to bond," which is just so realistic, like both of them wouldn't be scrambling to be as far away from the other one as possible, and they talk about how this super cute dentist down the bar is into S&M, and how much they hate networking, and chit-chatting, all the things that normal people do and how much they are above them, but before they grab their Oscar the Grouch slippers and [Gilmore Girls](#) DVDs and call it a day, they trade business cards and then shiver because Nikki works for *Elle*, our mortal magazinemy.

I don't think Nikki was dissembling before realizing they were magazinemies, but now she's working it, and the reason I know that is that she compliments Betty's braces instead of asking what the fuck a thirty-eight-year-old woman is doing wearing color-coded braces instead of her dignity when there are already sooo many other immediately discernable problems; Betty compliments Nikki's awful hair-stripe, because God knows Betty *would* think that shit is cool. They randomly talk about the Gorgeous Gourmet and Nikki mentions that he's catering an upcoming *Elle* party, and then immediately sticks her be-sweatered elbow in the ranch dip they've decided is appropriate to nosh on. I guess since this is Betty's 40th business card, she's done networking and just wants to hang out, which is fine except it sort of means she still doesn't really get it. So with dip all over her eighth layer of clothing, they talk about how "real" (meaning "obese") they are, and Betty takes off just long enough for Nikki to grin crazily down at Betty's Blackberry like she's going to eat it with the rest of the fuzzy ranch dip.

And I mean, I kind of hate Nikki Blonsky. But I'm not calling her a phone-eating ham sandwich because I hate her and feel like anti-fatso hate speech is the way to go, because nobody whines about being called fat like fat people. I'm calling her that because the show is calling her that, because the entire hateful message of this scene is that if you're Betty you can't trust anybody but people just like you, either in the way they look or their lack of basic social skills, which just sort of means you're right for being a loser in the first place, and I don't like that.

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I know it's fun to be a victim, but the thing that freaks me out about this kind of thinking is that it's *just as much fun* to be a victim whether or not anybody is victimizing you, or even fucking cares, which means you can't really trust yourself once you head down that path. I guess I should just be grateful that she gets burned for taking the easy way out, except for how it makes it seem like Nikki's evil and Betty's completely innocent as usual, like if there were just *another* fat girl at Swill -- perhaps somewhere *behind* Nikki Blonsky -- she would have been better off sticking to her own kind. Ugh. Assuming somebody sucks because of the way they look is a fast-forward trip to a hell of your own devising, because if the best you can do is assume that beautiful people are stupid, then you deserve your loneliness.

So Betty comes in walking all weird and waddly and screaming about nothing, then fills Daniel in on how *Elle's* cover shoot no longer conflicts with *Mode's* trip to Venice, which means Betty wins the bottle of very nice wine. They chatter about how Betty's got a friend at *Elle* now and that can't possibly bite her in the ass, and then Daniel asks Betty to (DO HER JOB) instead of leaving work early, and pick up the Halston dress at five. Betty acts like she's being slow-motion destroyed, then fills up a big bin of beauty samples for Hilda's giftbags, and he bitches because the *Queens Morning Tribulation* is doing a story on Hilda's garage boutique -- which I'm so sure -- and Christina offers to go back to Queens with Papi for again, no reason, but I thought they already said that and anyway, who knows what she really said. Ignacio pisses his panties for no reason about how Betty should apparently just hoist Hilda onto her back and carry her to the land where rainbows come from, or at least as far as she can get until her feet are worn down into bloody stumps.

Now I will lay some knowledge on you, because I don't know very much about TV but I do know what the problem is here. You know how if you have a gun in the first act you have to have the gun go off in the third act, you know that thing? Well, there is an opposite corollary that if you're going to have a gun go off in the third act, probably you should have the gun in the room in the first act so that people get used to it. And when you're a screenwriter, something you must always understand and never forget is that we the audience do not have your time machine. We don't have the luxury of going back to page ten when you realize somewhere around page forty that you forgot the gun.

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So really, what this episode is about is about the very last thing -- Ignacio's heart attack -- and the fake contrived conflict that it symbolizes. That's at the end of the episode, although handled so poorly that you couldn't be blamed for finding Betty to be the only non-asshole left standing at the end of the episode. But then instead of working organically toward that ending, the story works backwards, with 3x5 notecards scattered in its wake like breadcrumbs. The idea being that you have to earn this emotional climax by demonstrating the two sides of the argument (work v. family) and resolving them in an unexpected and powerful way (Betty ignores calls about heart attack). Never write backwards, because we can always tell when you're faking it.

As Betty's side goes, this works somewhat: we see her struggling with it, trying to have it all, scrambling to offer compromises to satisfy all three (Daniel/*Mode*, Jodie/YETI and the Suarezes). Where it falls down is the "networking" subplot, which unnecessarily tries to shoehorn itself into all three where the Halston dress task would have sufficed, and the Suarez part. Because the Suarezes do not share a fucking leg to stand on this week, because Betty is too good at taking care of them for them to have anything to bitch about. And I'm sorry, teleplay on paper, but simply taking a break every three or four scenes to scream

BETTY YOU ARE OVERLOOKING YOUR FAMILY doesn't make it feel *true*, it just makes us feel *screamed at*.

The only thing that would make it feel true is *if she actually overlooked her family at any point*, which she never does, because this show has *never* managed to find the balance between Saint Betty and Human Betty, which is why I'm happiest when they find ways around this particular kind of storyline. (I would never suggest going anywhere as retarded or clueless as the plagiarism episode, for example, ever again.) But it's not because they *can't* do it -- and God knows America's talented enough to sell anything, she could make Betty operating a meth lab seem adorable and slapstick -- but because this show still has this made-up likeability issue with Betty, and this season seems to really want to sell us on her awesomeness. Which seems more and more desperate the less and less awesome she gets.

All of which means a lot of inorganic complaining from Hilda, puffed-up chesting from Ignacio about literally nothing, and Betty running around frantically but never getting anywhere, because there's nowhere for her to go, because the entire story rests in the last five seconds of the episode, which is bullshit because when you're a viewer, you don't have the option of watching it backwards: it's a story, and it works like stories work. And instead we have gestures, punchlines with sketched-in setup, no parallel structure to speak of unless you think "half-hour of limbo" is a structure, and jokes from the age of Brandon and Brenda.

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If there were more worthy dialogue (meaning, I guess, Amanda) or the Daniel/Molly-Wilhelmina/Connor storyline didn't feel *the exact same way*, down to using the *exact same placeholder beats* instead of actual scenes with a brain or a heart or any courage at all, it probably wouldn't be so noticeable but the fact is that everything I just said about the Suarezes applies double to the Connor-Molly story, for the same reason. Which means that of the three plots here (Queens, YETI, *Mode* romance) in this episode, the only one with any life or humor in it at all is the one guest-starring Nikki Fucking Blonsky, which is the most offensive part of all.

Wili lounges briefly against her kitchen counter with Marc in her perfect apartment, planning her move on Connor while Marc hints and mugs and begs, all outrageously, to come to the party, and of course she says he's not, but you know this episode well enough by now to know that he will be at that party obviously, and that Betty will too because it's the same night as Hilda's whatever. Marc does call this plan "juicy couture," which is funny, but it's not that funny.

No, this scene is good, actually, and should have carried the whole storyline. The redecorated Casa Suarez looks like Claire's just felched a Spencer's Gifts, which is how Hilda likes it, and Christina walks in quacking like a duck at her, and Hilda pretends to understand her primitive crazytalk, and then there's about three really sweet seconds where Hilda gives herself a well-earned, awesome pat on the back, and then basically explains the *actual* issue, which is that Betty is still working on balancing the various parts of her life, and Hilda just honestly misses her. Which is all you had to say, honestly, because that's real. Which means that yet again Ignacio has ruined everything by trying to be the voice of all morality, when the actual conflict here is that Hilda wants to impress Betty and show her what they have in common. That's a story you could love, because then Hilda's whining and

constantly bringing it back to Betty would make sense and wouldn't seem so petty and thick.

I guess the only solution -- since you have to have Ignacio front and center in this episode to give the ending some weight -- would have been to make him the third front somehow, instead of awkwardly making him the standard-bearer for an unrelated conflict so that he's the voice of Betty's guilt. Which would imply her having something to be guilty about, which would imply her doing something to be guilty about instead of just blundering through the episode and constantly looking like she's going to vomit. But whatever, cute scene, and then Christina has some kind of contraction or something and they bond or whatever.

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Betty heads over to the poor man's *Zoolander* with the shadowy Halston collector sitting in a dark room with opera playing and a candystriped tie, and the guy tells her "Betty Suarez" already picked up the dress, because Nikki Blonsky gave him her business card and used her name. Betty heads back to *Mode* with the news, and Wili fires her immediately. Daniel of course laughs this off, and Betty grovels about how Nikki stole the thing while she was washing ranch off her sweater, and they have a conference call with *Elle*. It's cute, as celebrity cameos often are, although if you have to ask whether losing Nina Garcia was bad for *Elle*, all you have to do is consider the fact that they hired Nikki Blonsky to work there.

Betty and Nikki scream at each other over the web-conference screens and it's embarrassing and unrealistically unprofessional, but not really in that day-glo Betty way it could have been, and Wili finally shuts them all up and tells them to stop holding *Mode* hostage, and then the *Elle* people take off, and Nikki smirks at everybody, and Wili's thoughts turn once again to murder and she tells Betty she doesn't belong in this business and runs off. Daniel passive-aggressively takes responsibility for this fuckup by admitting he shouldn't have expected basic shit from Betty, and runs off all sucky and dumb. Is his last name Suarez suddenly?

Flushing talk and Scottish talk abound, so who knows what they're talking about, and Ignacio tells Betty to man up and stop feeling bad about fucking up, and she whines about Daniel losing faith in her, and she's all about tearing up Nikki's business card as this act of ultimate revenge. Justin comes in to say that "Crazy Fingernail Lady" is asking for rum, which is the second laugh of the entire episode, and then Betty locates the business card of the Gorgeous Gourmet, who is catering the *Elle* party that's going on the same night as all these other parties in this episode, of course. A lightbulb goes off over her bushy little head and she gets Marc to meet her and Gorgeous Gourmet at the *Elle* offices to steal back the dress. Hilda -- resplendent and professional, with a curly side-pony -- spots her and immediately starts bitching about how Betty's not being demonstrative enough about Hilda's amazing life. Which has yet to begin, because this is a party for a thing that does not yet exist and does not require Betty's presence in any way.

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Hilda stomps off after Betty tries to explain the actual, real shit going on in her career, and then Ignacio comes up and spits in her eye for good measure. She provides him with about sixteen valid reasons why he needs to shut up, but you know Papi: he will never, ever shut up until death's cold hand finally jerks him off the stage. So Betty leaves to do *her* actual shit

for *her* actual job to make up for *her* multimillion-dollar mistake, and Hilda gets back to *her* guests at *her* party for *her* new business, while Ignacio stews and hates and acts ridiculous as usual.

Molly compliments Wili on her apartment, and Wili laughs about how she likes to look down from the penthouse at the little people, and then sends Molly off to be intercepted by Daniel. They act awkward and dumb and stammer some more, and he drags her off to the bedroom to ask her "something" in "private." She's got trepidations, but not really.

Gorgeous Gourmet sneaks them into the *Elle* offices and puts paid to Marc's notion that chatting up caterers is a bad idea, because at least Gorgeous Gourmet understands the actual concept of networking and not the stupid definition this episode uses, but once again we see that Betty's inability to accomplish a single task -- without stopping to pet bunnies or pick up garbage from the street or bring Christina into the mix -- is actually a virtue, while shallow Marc will never succeed no matter how hard he tries because he's too busy making industry contacts.

Daniel explains that his heart is mushy and his brain is mushy and his eyes are dewy with love and Molly explains that she has been with Connor for four years and Daniel needs to cut it out. But on the other hand, Connor is actually devoted to his career and expects her to understand that, while Daniel's doing great if he actually shows up at work, so it's less like *totally creeping* and more like a conversation among adults. Daniel admits that what he is doing is totally shady and gross, not to mention a horrible business move, and he doesn't want to hurt Connor, but... He's going to anyway, so just look him in the eye and tell him there are no Daniel feelings, just Connor feelings. Molly stares at him for a ridiculous amount of time and busts the eff past him, because this is gross.

Wili and Connor entertain Zac Posen and his two female friends, who are in costume as She-Ra for some reason. Wili cracks a joke about how nobody knows what Connor is talking about because of the Australian accent, and Zac talks in his fake weird voice about how hot Connor is. You know how sometimes somebody talks so gay that it's like they have a concussion? "Who *caaaares* what he *sooooo*nds like, look at the way he *looooo*oks," and I mean, Zac Posen is one hot little bitch, but that voice makes me want to fucking lose it. (Or I suppose, in other words: who cares what he sounds like?) Zan tells them they make "the most*diviiiiine* couple" and swans off. Connor says he's flattered, and Wili notes they'd make a bad-ass power couple, then admits she can't handle being around him ever since that business trip where she tried to bone him. Just then, Molly comes running up with Daniel's excessive emotions still dripping from her dress, and they take off. Wili's face tries for "yearning" but ends up somewhere around "I'm sure another taxi will drive by soon."

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Marc and Betty locate the Halston dress in *Elle*'s closet, where he knew it would be ("I'm not doing this for you, I'm doing this to get a better Christmas present from Wilhelmina") and then points out the Ugly Wall, where they put up pictures of ugly coworkers to make fun of them. Marc's idea, naturally. He tells her to hurry up and plays with a giant furry hat while she works on the dress's vintage snaps, but then they hear somebody coming and freeze. They hug in fear and a drunk couple of drunks come in giggling, but where are they?

Weekend At Bernie's-ing the mannequin down the hall and through the party with the big furry hat over its face so it just seems like a drunk model. That works. Then the mannequin's

head falls off and Nikki spots them, wearing quite the party outfit: tailored skirt, too-tight wrist bangle making her arm look like a sausage, and a shapeless wide-neck top with three-quarter sleeves that make her look grossly out of proportion like a Tyrannosaurus Rex, and cinched with a belt right around where her waist would be if she had one but instead just seems to be holding her head-sized boobs up and dividing her body into two equal-sized blobs with her stupid pink hair on top like a stripper-haired snowman. Looks like somebody got all diva on wardrobe, because there is no other justification for putting her body through this insanity. She is just not as fat as her clothes are telling you she is. Then they fight and it's dumb and I don't recap fisticuffs because I am opposed to both violence and stupid shit, and they get away just as Nikki's bearing down on them with giant white flowers clutched in her honey-baked fists.

Daniel explains to Wili that he knew what she was up to, and has finally figured out her crush on Connor. He says he won't hold the fact that she's human against her (which isn't the punchline but is sort of funnier than the punchline, like, "You're in love with Connor too? You're only human!") and that he'll keep her humanity a secret. They grin at each other in that super-affectionate thrilling way they've started doing this year, love that, and then Betty and Marc show up with the dress and headless mannequin. Wili admits she's intrigued and then invites all three of them in. "Pinch me!" Marc breathes. "Don't touch me!" Marc hisses.

Daniel gives them champagne and Marc quietly giggles about how he's the first assistant to make it into one of Wili's parties -- explaining, of course, that he'll leave her out of the story when he tells it -- and they share a super-sweet moment of pride and excitement about how their lives are finally happening. Marc sets off toward Zac and Betty spots Jodie, who is really looking quite well for a lady of a thousand and six, and ignores Hilda's phone call. Which would be totally acceptable, but is doubly acceptable because Jodie is heading straight for Betty. Betty puts her phone on silent and they discuss how Betty's gotten her contacts together, and then Jodie acts all weird and tells Betty the shrimp are spicy and then wanders the fuck away in the middle of talking to Betty. As I'm sure people often do.

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Betty, never one to let something happen organically or prove herself before asking for favors, crawls right up inside Jodie's dress with neediness splashed across her face and asks Jodie to be her mentor. And it's a credit to Bernadette Peters that she actually manages to sell "Let's start with me not kicking you out of YETI" without even a hint of the obvious writeoff that this character would realistically do at this point -- just a subtle warning tone about the cart going behind the horse -- because if this were real life, you would get a bright red *Family Feud* XXX right across your face at this point. When did Betty's optimism and belief in self stop being inspiring and start looking pathetic? I guess when she stopped earning it on the back end. I'm giving this show one more week.

Betty acts totally fake and stupid with a random party guy, just like they taught her, and then later on goes to Queens, I guess for the tail end of the party. There's a huge mess in the kitchen, with a dramatically-lit overturned kitchen chair, and on her phone there are fifty thousand messages from silenced Hilda. She calls immediately, and Hilda's crying, and tells Betty that Ignacio had a heart attack.

"La Ritournelle" starts playing and you realize the episode's about to start: Molly's on Daniel's steps when he gets home, and tells him she can't deny her feelings for him. And

not only that, but she dumped Connor. Daniel stares at her boring giant face and finally kisses her, and it is awesome because of Sebastian Tellier, and then meanwhile at Wili's house, she's lounging around looking hot, and Connor shows up looking broken and sad and drunk and then he just fucking grabs her and kisses her super awesome hard great job, and Papi's on life support and Justin is crying on Hilda's breast, and she still looks fucking amazing as usual, and Betty throws herself down on him and Hilda holds her hand, and man, I wish this paragraph was the whole episode but I don't like thinking that the awesome episode-ending montage is a crutch, or -- even worse -- that they only *seem* awesome when the episode is sucky otherwise, or -- worst of all -- both at once.

"This episode really just ... isn't that great." *Let's find a song and turn the last two acts of this well-written and emotionally valid script into a montage.* "But then what will we do for the other forty minutes of the episode?" *Fuck it, all they ever talk about is the montages anyway. Just write any old fucking thing.* "Should it be interesting or funny?" *I guess so, if you've got time, but don't throw your back out.* "Oh no, the writer's assistant from *Men In Trees* stole my Blackberry at our softball game!" *Then I guess it's crunch time. Call Alex Patsavas and ask her what she was using months ago, and we'll just pick from that list at random.* "Is this really what writing TV was supposed to be like?" *Yes. It's kind of like writing TV.* "Can I be in the Guild now? My health insurance is really expensive." *Go write a Two & A Half Men or something and we'll talk.*

TV IS A MEDIUM

By [Jacob Clifton](#) | Season 3 | Episode 12 | Aired on 01.22.2009

Sisters On The Verge Of A Nervous Breakdown - The few good ideas the show's had this season get taken off the table for no good reason, and Betty goes home to Queens for no good reason.

God, I hate my entire family and wish they were never born. Don't you? Or better yet: wouldn't it be better if nobody existed whatsoever? Just perfect fucking Ugly Betty, casting aspersions and pointing fingers at reruns on SOAPnet, with nothing but our robot masters to tell us what to do and what to find funny? Because dude, El Inequívoco, you have managed to the joy out of basic things. BASIC things, like this show, which we used to love and which have been sucking for a while now, without apology.

The gay jokes just seem like gay hate, the Betty jokes seem like Betty hate, the Wili jokes seem like lady hate, and every line out of Daniel's mouth pretty much sounds like person hate. Thought they knew where that line was, but... this shit is *halfway through the season*. Literally.. And you don't care. There is a fine line between snarky humor and outright tone-deaf bitchy squealing like some unfulfilled old queen at the bar in the gay club who can't understand that his horrible personality is the reason that nobody will ever love him. Which, somehow, is what this show has become.

Remember when Ignacio had his heart attack or his heartburn or whatever? Because there's a little-known scientific fact that this almost makes you completely stupid. So whatever happens throughout the episode, it's amped up considerably by the fact that suddenly Ignacio can't find his way from Manhattan to Queens. Which is only shocking if you hate Ignacio and assume that his old stupid ass can't find the subway, which I do, but the show *does not*, so it's this horrible tragedy.

Hilda's all, "Why weren't you there fifteen weeks ago when Papi didn't die!?" and Betty's all, "I wish I was! Neglecting my career is all I'm about now!" Pretty much the most worthless, backward, ugly, nasty storyline this show has ever put on us. Now, for a season and a half! Which begs the question, why the FUCK are we still watching this show? I'm getting paid. What's your excuse?

I don't care about one fucking thing that happens in this show. I used to care, I used to love this show and I haven't cared for approximately a billion years, and even still this episode managed to make me care half of that previous zero fucking amount. My friend Sarah the playwright came by toward the end, and she was like, "OMG what is this show? It seems like the most boring thing that ever happened on TV." Imagine my shame when I told her it was *Ugly Betty*, which used to be one of my favorite shows.

Daniel and Molly, and Wilhelmina and Connor, canoodle in various high-profile places and then freak out when people take pictures of them. That's their source of drama this week: they went to celeb vacation spots, and vacationed there with celebs, and then uh-oh. But who can blame them? Three of them are famous magazine editors and the other one is a *kindergarten teacher*, so obviously they can just gallivant all over the place weeks at a time. So Daniel and Betty have to book it to Jersey, where the secret life of that Suzuki dude from *Entourage* is exposed: he's a family man, and not a worthless bitchy gay stereotype at all! Betty and Daniel beg his pardon, and head back to Manhattan.

Not that Betty was ever there, because she was taking vague "care" of Ignacio the whole time, which seems to mean 99% "being fucking irritating" and 1% "doing anything a child could do." Ignacio spends the whole time coughing and *cheating death like a dick*, persisting in his fucking uselessness well past his expiration date, and on a similarly uninteresting front Wili sells out her assistant Marc to cover her ass for a lost meaning, and then buys him something to make up for it, and the show acts like this is not something that happens every single day and that suddenly Marc being an assistant is asking for it.

Hilda throws a made-up fake fucking fight... Seriously, get this. Claire Meade offers to loan Betty her billion dollar cardiologist, and Betty manages to be ungrateful about that, but then she tells Hilda, who manages to be a dick about it and act like Papi getting sick and her own fucked-up poor-ass pointless life actually exists because she's there to take care of Ignacio and not because as a mother and nearly 40-year-old human being she hasn't managed a life where she has her own apartment, but somehow this is Betty's fault.

And the show goes, "You know what? That is Betty's fault. Fuck her for having a life, or a career, or anything like a human existence. And while we're at it, fuck Wilhelmina for even wishing. Whatever, fuck this show. As much as I love Betty's scenes with Amanda, and Marc's stories, I'm annoyed to a point I can't even tell you about how misused and toxic the entire rest of the cast has ended up being written. And honestly? If it were just Betty stuck in the middle of a horrible, mean-spirited, unintelligent and unfunny cartoon world, that would be okay. Because that was S1, which rocked. But the fact that Betty has managed to get stupid at the same rate or faster than the rest of these idiots means there's no reason to watch at all.

Want more? The full recap starts right below!

This will be my last weecap of this show, the very simple reason being that it is incredibly difficult to write about a show if you're refusing to watch it. Although writing about this show in particular without actually watching it would be sort of *apropos*, since this season -- at whose halfway point we now are -- has been like watching somebody blindfolded assembling episodes of *Ugly Betty* following the oral instructions of somebody else. Somebody who's actually seen the show, but is maybe not so gifted at verbal communication. Even though Fred Allen performed with a ventriloquist's dummy, which is usually a dealbreaker for me, he got a few things right. "Television is a medium because anything well done is rare." I see what you did there, Fred Allen. I read you loud and clear.

During an Elliott Smith interlude that seems to last two weeks, which is how long narratively it does, we learn that Ignacio's not even dead, just malingering on the couch and looking even more like a scary old woman than usual. The girls hector him and climb around on his ass bothering him and treating every snuffle like it's the harbinger of doom and not, you know, a thing that happens. Q: What is Ignacio currently refusing to die from? A: Myocardial infarction. Solution? Quadruple bypass. Because you can't just have a common surgery on this show, you have to have all four of them, to prove how *deadly serious* it is that Betty has an apartment and a job and a life of her own as a grown-ass woman. How much of a bitch is Betty for having dreams and making them come true? *Quadruple* amount of bitch, that's what.

Because one of the themes of this episode is that Ignacio is apparently a doddering old senile freak who can't manage to tie his shoelaces and thus must never be left to his own devices, Hilda and Betty chase each other around the apartment talking about how they

keep seeing this bluebird out the window, which is code for not talking about finances or matters of importance in front of Ignacio. Also dumb. He repeatedly explains to them that they are not fooling him, just lying and patronizing like big old assholes, but they don't care. Whoever wrote this piece of crap actually thinks this is hilarious, and it happens about thirty times throughout the episode: "Did you hear that bluebird?" "Yeah, I think I saw it *in the kitchen*." It's not funny, it's just dumb. It comes from nowhere and goes nowhere.

Oh, and Betty keeps leaving obnoxious post-its everywhere instructing Hilda about basic shit. Hilda just can't handle the fact that Betty is trying to make sure all the bases are covered, but then it turns out that Hilda actually is pulling some Betty business of her own, wanting to do more stupid shit for her boutique, and Ignacio gets in the way of that, but since this show is evil that makes Hilda a jerk, too. It sounds more complex than it is. Basically: if you want anything, do anything, have any skills or abilities for which you think you should be compensated with a career and a place to live, you're an asshole. Particularly if you're a woman. If you're a woman, you might as well just climb in bed with your parents and never leave, because if you do anything else, you're disgusting. Oh, and if you're a woman with any kind of business savvy at all, you probably will completely lose your mind and start acting like you're on meth the first time you see a dick. And if you're a gay man, you're asking? To which I respond, *A what?*

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Amanda throws herself on Betty when she finally gets home: "Betty! Oh my God, you look fantastic! How many times did I tell you to stop eating that fatty Mexican food? You are too young to have a heart attack!" Heh. She continues to attack Betty for making her worry, which would be funnier/make more sense if she hadn't been gone for two entire weeks, and then remembers to pretend to be concerned about Ignacio, and then informs Betty that while she was gone Amanda allowed the house to fall into such disrepair that they now have roaches, with whom Amanda has reached a *détente*. "At first I was scared, and then I tried naming them... That's Little Betty. She's just like you: a survivor." And then, I think, we are to assume that everyone at *Mode* took a two-week unpaid vacation, which is either verrrrrry convenient or it's just the case that they literally shut down the entire magazine while Betty was off doing the important lifesaving work of watching her Dad lie on a couch and talking about that fucking bluebird.

Molly and Daniel spent the holiday sunning on beaches and running into effing [Speidi](#) all over the place. Which would be funny? Except really it's just setup for the "payoff" of Connor finding out that Molly ... went to a beach. After they mutually broke up with each other. Scandalous! Daniel lets drop a joke intended to make us believe that he watches *The Hills*, but it's so generic and clueless that it's clearly written by someone who has never seen the show, so it's lame in a whole other way. Mabi-us you should thinki-us about leaving this crappi-us showi-us. They talk about how Connor is going to freak out that they're together, and pretend that they actually care about that at all, but as lazily as they've done everything else since they met. "A picture of Connor. Look." "I know. Should we tell him that we are dating?" "I don't really care one way or the other." "I love you because of your pectoral muscles." "Oh. I love you because your hair is yellow."

Betty throws her arms around Daniel when she sees him, because he's a better family to her than anyone else on this show, and they talk about how he sent Ignacio twelve dozen flowers. He gives her the vacation photos that he was just discussing with Molly how they should never fall into the wrong hands, and then Wilhelmina comes in with different photos

so that Betty can mix them up, obviously, from the Halston cover from last week. If you care enough to even remember that there have been episodes before this one you're currently watching, which -- if you *do* care enough to have seen the show before, and are cognizant enough to remember what it was like -- I daresay this is the week you just stop watching this bullshit altogether, and invite you to join me in deleting it from our DVRs and TiVos as a group. And then as a group pouring salt and ashes directly into our DVRs and TiVos, so that no offensive, brainless, hateful piece of crap like this will ever grow there again.

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Wili has a goggle-tan from skiing on her break, so she looks like the Hamburglar in reverse. And then so does Connor. And Daniel's like, maybe he's going to put it together that they were off skiing together, and how shocking, because he was off with Connor's ex-fiancée at the same time in some other, unrelated location. Wili tries to fuck Connor in the bathroom and acts like a drug addict some more, and he makes fun of her for being so boy crazy, and she cracks a tasteless joke about how even the "special" boy in the mailroom has them figured for a couple of Hamburglars in love. Then she applies mystery cream to Connor's sunburn ("You're not allergic to panda, are you?") and then Marc catches them coming out of the bathroom, and pulls her skirt out of her panties for her, because Wili can no longer even dress herself.

Hilda has been invited to create the hairdos for an entire *quinceañera*, fifteen girls, and because she is excited and moving forward with her career, Betty must stomp all over her shit and tell her she's being irresponsible for *succeeding at her job*, because how can you be *working* and *earning money in a fulfilling fashion* when you could be watching your stupid old father sit on the couch and turn slowly into a lady. Like, where are your priorities. Hilda takes the opportunity to point out that working for money is what people do, so they can then exchange that money for goods and services, but Betty's having *none*. She tells Hilda that simply saying the word *quinceañera* is like murdering their father with words, and calls her sister a failure who should have been drowned at birth, and hangs up so she can be a bitch to Claire.

Betty mixes up the photos, obviously, while she's on this call, and then Claire says you only call your doctor by his first name if you're a drug-seeker like she used to be, and Betty should not be taking Ignacio to "Dr. Steve," but instead to this specialist who is a family friend. Betty hems and haws about this for a sec, and then accepts with much more grace than you might have expected. Betty heads home to Queens, and learns that Hilda's version of taking Ignacio to the doctor means calling Dr. Steve on the phone and having him say everything's fine. Because after a quadruple bypass, it's possible to be this stupid.

That fucking bluebird is sighted, and Betty drags Hilda into the kitchen to thank her for being so effing stupid all of a sudden in order to move this disgusting plotline along. Then she bitches at her for taking the *quinceañera* job, as though this is even minorly close to being any of her fucking business, and then bitches at Hilda even more for not de-linting Papi's sweaters. But lest you think she's being an insane asshole, which she is, she is also vindicated by Hilda being an even bigger asshole, like, has forgotten to give him his pills. Then Papi limps into the kitchen to get some tea -- so apparently he can handle boiling water, okay, but not taking a pill on his own -- and that fucking bluebird goes around to some other stupid area of their stupid house, and they have even more of this same exact fight.

Hilda gets mad at Betty for getting Papi an appointment with the cardiologist. Gets mad at her, because -- somehow -- it means that she can't do the *quinceañera* job. Nobody thinks to explain how or why this is true, because it's that stupid. [*"And wouldn't the quinceañera be on the weekend? When Betty would be home? And the doctor wouldn't be working?" -- Angel*] Then Hilda tells her to fuck off because she's always working so how dare she tell Hilda how to take care of their dad, and Betty says she *has* to be "Betty Bossypants" because if she doesn't, Hilda's stupidity and laziness will cause the entire borough to burn down around their ears, starting with Papi. Who is a GROWN MAN who is STANDING RIGHT THERE and can obviously do BASIC SHIT like take a cab to a PLACE.

Then it weirdly and even more stupidly turns into some kind of double-dog dare where Hilda says Betty can't possibly juggle work and family responsibilities, and Betty's all about to make her eat her words and whatnot. And the way this show used to be, which is *good*, there would be a bump or two in the road and Betty would work it out through her ingenuity and sunny disposition, and you'd want to hug her, and it would be great. But because this show is now *sucky*, instead it's going to be about humiliating her and knocking her down a few pegs for thinking she deserves anything whatsoever. And worst of all, Ignacio Suarez will live on, refusing to die and getting more obnoxious and judgmental with each passing day.

There's a signed photo of Dick Cheney on the wall at the cardio's office that says, "Thanks for being discreet." Very droll. The doctor is played by that hottie from that show about the gay aliens where the guns are like gross seafood bracelets you can never take off. Do you remember that show? It was one of those weird syndicated Saturday-afternoon *Cleopatra 2525* kind of shows. I've always had a soft spot for those. There's one right now that I've caught a few times that seems to be about a bunch of dirty nuns running around in the forest talking all British, and then somebody will dress up in leather and tie somebody else up. Then -- I have already seen this happen eleven times in the ten cumulative minutes of this show I've seen -- one of the dirty nuns will look somebody in the eye and do some voodoo shit on them, and then they're all, "Mistress, order me around. I am now your slave." I'm serious, that's what the show is about. Unabashed catnip for that certain kind of nerd that isn't actually that much into sex, but knows that he's supposed to be, so it has to get all weird and twice-as-kinky in his head and now he's going to require two girlfriends and to get tied up, and maybe you should yell at him in Klingon while you're fucking. Before the internet, those guys would have died virgins but now it's as easy as directing your telnet to alt.low.self.esteem and finding some girl who's like, "Yeah, I'm desperate enough for a boyfriend that I'm willing to pretend other girls' tits are a turn-on, and the constant tickling and weird infantile cuddle-behavior is not totally fucking creepy. Thanks, internet."

Anyway, maybe Papi's cough is because of something bad, so it's good that she brought him into the office rather than just calling him up on the phone. Or texting, that's probably the next thing Hilda's going to do to show how much more of a fool she is than you already thought. "Inflammation of the pericardium LOL." Wili and Connor come into her office talking about how awesome they are, and she calls Marc a "big gay flagpole" for just standing there when he could be scampering off to get champagne for her, and he leaves, and they say numbers at each other, and get horny, and then they fuck. Because talking

about negotiation is sexy. Marc, snagging the champagne, runs into some Germans that Wili's meeting with, who have shown up early. They are humorless and scary and Aryan, and have no time for Marc's mess. He takes them back to Wili's office, sees her boning Connor in there, and tells the Germans that it's an American tradition to circle the building several times. Dumb.

Meanwhile, Betty's talking to Hilda about how maybe something else is going on with Papi but it's probably fine, and Hilda's like, "Don't tell me you're leaving Papi there alone, because I am up to my ears in teenagers right now! I cannot just run off." Creating even more stupid conflict and fakery, because now Betty is going to be all, "I have to stay with my Dad or else something terrible will happen, so I have to make some phone calls!" Amanda calls her and she hangs up on Hilda. "Some guy from a photo lab called and said you messengered your phone bill to him. If he pays it, can I send him our other bills?" Because Amanda still rules, no matter how harsh the rest of the show is sucking. So I guess that she had more than just the two sets of photos, but other things that also needed to be mailed, so everything's going to the wrong place, but most of all the Halston dress photos were supposed to be leaked to Suzuki St. Pierre of *Fashion Buzz*, but instead they were Daniel's super-secret vacation photos that nobody must see. Amanda gets the impression that Betty is having another heart attack, and she repeats that she never had the first one, it was her Dad, and Amanda is simultaneously caring and oblivious: "I know, Betty, but these things get passed down. They're generic."

Marc tells post-coital Wili that the Germans are gone, and she says he should have stalled them. He says that yes, he tried, but the point is that -- "mince when you walk, not when you talk," this fucking show says -- "the most talented woman in fashion is missing meetings because her head is... elsewhere." Because how on earth could anyone respect a woman with her sexuality intact? Whatever, this is stupid. She doesn't really care about any of this, because that's part of her completely losing the plot because of boys.

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Betty checks in with Daniel, and notes that she needs to get his vacation photos back from Suzuki. Daniel immediately gets panicky, and she realizes that they are special photos. She assumes they're filth, because he's asked her to print out filth before, but of course it's much worse! He's dating a girl! He quickly confesses this to Betty, and she keeps calling Molly "Connor's Molly," and he swears that they are totes in love, whatever bleh, and he freaks out because Molly wanted to keep it a secret, and even though Betty is standing in a hospital far away from them, she promises to get them back, so Daniel doesn't have to interrupt his busy schedule of standing around looking hot and not doing anything for himself. Betty tries to get in to tell Papi she's leaving his ass there, but she can't go in because they're doing tests on him, and the nurse tells her it's going to be at least four hours, so just go do your thing. The nurse promises to tell him where she's at, and she goes to visit Suzuki.

Whom I've always found annoying because he's a grotesque unreal stereotype that teaches us to assume the worst about gay men, which is that they're unintelligent and shallow and consumed with fascination for women's clothing and eternal youth, which is why they don't deserve the rights that adults in the country deserve, such as marriage, because it's laughable to presume that two gay men getting married would be any less disastrous than Juliette Lewis and Giovanni Ribisi getting married, in real life or in the film *The Other Sister*, because they're not really adult men like regular adult men, they're weird bitchy aliens, the

best shopping buddies, the ones who always say what we're thinking but can't say out loud, because our opinions actually matter and would have consequences: Every king needs a jester, and every girl needs a Suzuki St. Pierre. And it's nothing I've not said before, but if you told me there was something even more annoying that could happen with Suzuki St. Pierre, I would have called you a liar and boxed your ears. And that would be uncool of me, because you would have been right.

So Suzuki tells Betty, rightly, to eff off because he's not interested in playing nice, because pictures of Daniel Meade having an affair with his CFO's fiancée are, at the least, sort of interesting. Sort of. Betty's all, but they broke up so it's not even scandalous! But Suzuki saw that quibble coming, and says that it could be even more scandalous because what if he stole her away for a sexy Caribbean getaway, and she asks him to kill the story as a personal favor. Of course, he asks her if he's supposed to know who the heck she is, and they do the whole song and dance about how they've met like a hundred times. Which would be funnier if they hadn't all happened in this season and we weren't getting callbacks to shit from five seconds ago.

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What does it tell you that the best part of the episode is a wordless montage of Amanda playing in the *Mode* Closet? She dances past Wili and Connor fucking, and yuckily Marc is somehow in there too, while they are fucking, and then he grabs Marc and whisks her away. Um, it's Amanda. She's not going to notice. And if she notices she won't care. And if she cares, it will be random and creepy and not about what you think it's about. Anyway, he acts weird enough that she puts it together, and then he threatens her with badness, and she doesn't care, but the reason that he cares is because God "tests the pretty people so much more than the regular lumpy people," meaning that things are finally going his way: YETI, Wili's finally a EIC, etc. But now he can't ride her coattails because her coat is on the floor in a pile because she has lost her way: "It's just I've never had to deal with a boss who cared more about sex than work. Actually, maybe this is what working for Daniel is like."

Betty discusses all this crap with Marc for awhile, counseling him to "see those moments as career opportunities" and "step it up" and show everybody what you can do, and it's like: it is ugly. And it dresses like Minnie Mouse in a k-hole like Betty. And it talks, what it's saying right this second, is kind of like somebody's idea of what Betty would say, I guess. But it's still stupid and meaningless and glib. Just glib, just gestures toward something real that used to exist. This show is like a zombie, you know what I mean? And the people are so talented, and I'm going to miss these characters and actors so much, and so much of the qualities of its individual parts are still wonderful, but at the end of the day no matter how much makeup you slap on a zombie, it's still gonna have dead guy breath.

Anyway, they go track down some sad gay guy named Fabian to get dirt on Suzuki, but he won't dish about it because Suzuki is super famous. Amanda understands the need for discretion, because she dated someone famous and never told anybody: Jeremy Piven. "He goosed you on the subway once, Amanda. You talk about it constantly." Amanda threatens Fabian with starting a rumor about him having ambiguous genitalia, "like a Ken doll," which she characterizes as "the kind of stank that don't wash off." He gives them a random address in Jersey and they run off to put a few more nails in the coffin of this show.

Betty lies to Hilda about how she didn't just leave her adult father, who is in possession of his faculties and is a reasonably intelligent man, in a state-of-the-art medical facility

where tests vital to his continued health were being performed under presumably professional supervision. People will do anything to avoid admitting they're in Jersey. Daniel pushes forward lamely on the whole work vs. family conflict this show has settled on, all, "Guess my photos aren't all that important in the big picture," and she's like, "Um, they are, give me a break." Then they read the mail at the address they got from Fabian, and learn this address belongs to a Byron Wu. They think about how maybe that's his boyfriend, but it's not.

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Suzuki St. Pierre is actually a totally made up homosexual "character" being played by Byron Wu for reasons that make very little sense, and basically come down to spackle over the central idea that it's inherently hilarious that a man lucky enough to have a wife and children and the normal healthy sexual predilections God gave him would choose for any reason to live publically as something as disgusting and shameful as a Sodomite. What a wacky mixed-up fuckin' world!

So then there's an unbearably long, offensive sequence in which we're asked to believe that there's a huge quantifiable difference between "Byron's" naturally high, effeminate voice and Suzuki's unnaturally high, offensively effeminate voice, while he does and says things you might think your average heterosexual would hypothetical do and say while standing around in the yard. They throw footballs around, I heard, and say things like "That's my boy," so he manages to do that in the middle of the conversation. It's so clueless and fucked up and stupid that everything he says starts seeming like some kind of mistaken heterosexual signifier: he says he got his journalism degree from "Columbia J-School," mentions Woodward and Bernstein, and he might as well be talking about testicles or trucks or tits.

So he wanted to be a regular J-person, but the only jobs available were "Britney this, Angelina that," which he hates sooo much but in order to be a J-person he has to ... This is so fucking stupid I don't even want to talk about it. He's an unattractive, squat man, and legitimate journalism is out the door, so the only thing that makes up for his lack of charisma is acting like a disgusting nasty stereotype of somebody else. "As a fabulous, bitchy queen, the fashion world welcomed me with open, well-toned arms!" he says, in his creepy Suzuki voice, and then grills some bratwurst and scratches his genitals and watches ESPN and has trouble relating to his wife on an emotional level, because she is from Venus.

Wili's prepping/pep-talking Connor for their meeting with the weird Germans, and tells him to flirt with her -- because Connor has literally no personality beyond being hot, have you noticed that? -- and he's like, "I can't just flirt with people," and yes he can we've seen it, and Wili's like, "Do you mean I'm special?" And yes, he does, so they fuck, which means when the weird Germans get there she's not available, so Marc panics and yells French at them and they become friends. Maybe the Germans are French. Maybe these are different people altogether -- no, Collette is a French name, so they're a Franco-German company. Which is scary, if that's even true, but I can't tell and maybe made it up during one of the fifty times this exact same fucking scene happens in this episode. If you honestly think it matters, congratulations: you officially care more than this show does.

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Betty swings by the hospital to see if her father has survived the battery of routine noninvasive tests that are performed every day in this cardiologist's office, and her dad is gone. Just wandered the fuck out into the street. Which is, for me, ideal because he's horrible, but Betty has to throw a big fucking weird-out, and then immediately call Hilda so she can bitch and moan about it and they can both look like total idiots.

In a half-assed attempt at a sudden B plot, two-thirds of the way through the episode, Marc is charming the Teuto-Gallic Trio and being awesome and charming the shit out of all three of them, and Wili runs in and makes an ass of herself, throwing Marc under the bus in such a lame, hamfisted way that it's completely unbelievable: "I had no idea you were here, which is particularly tragic since I specifically told my assistant to call me as soon as you all arrived. This is... beginning to be a problem. So if it happens again, it'll be back to spritzing perfume at the makeup counter. That will be all, Marc," she says. "Nice to look at, but you could sit a Picasso behind his desk to do the same job," she says.

Which I guess if you're basing your ideas about business or the luxury industry based on a sloppy viewing of *The Devil Wears Prada* and a handful of *Sex & The City* episodes, that kind of behavior might seem realistic, but if you've ever been around *people* or enjoyed the company of *a person* then it just comes off as classless and tasteless and pointless as the majority of the episode. Try treating your assistant like this in front of a possible client and see how fucking far it gets you.

Hilda beats it into Manhattan so that she can throw her huge fucking fit for no reason. It goes like this:

Hilda: "You lost Dad!"

Betty: "I know, sorry!"

Hilda: "You lost Dad!"

Betty: "I know, let's go find him."

Hilda: "Or we can stand on this street corner and bitch and fight and cry for no reason, for the rest of our lives."

Betty: "Hey, there's the doctor! Randomly! Does he know where Dad is?"

Doctor: "Two hours ago I did, but he's on the move I bet. He seemed like he went senile off-screen in this episode and thus that would make sense as a source of narrative tension we're keeping secret from the audience in order to show disrespect both to our viewers and to the basic concepts of storytelling. But I wouldn't worry about it, two strange girls I don't know and am not getting paid to deal with, because he just had a QUADRUPLE BYPASS and thus isn't moving SUPER FAST."

Hilda: "It won't matter how slow he's moving, because I am going to stand right here yelling about how much I care about him, instead of actually looking for him, until the sun goes down."

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Doctor: "Oh, I forgot to tell you the results of those tests that we completed hours ago. Your dad is fine."

Hilda: "THAT MAKES ME EVEN MORE MAD."

Betty: "Really? That's sort of stupid."

Hilda: "No, Betty. Not this time. You're not getting away with it. It's your fault our mother is dead, it's your fault our father had a heart attack, it's your fault people get sick and die, it's

your fault we took him to the doctor and got this wonderful news, and it's your fault that our father is such a fucking douchebag that he wandered out into the city for NO REASON AT ALL."

Justin: "Oh, Grandpa just came home. I thought I would call you on your portable cellular phone and let you know that, although Grandpa thought otherwise for some reason."

Betty: "I'm so sorry that I'm such a terrible person that I let you be in charge of yourself for five seconds."

Hilda: "I hate how controlling you are, but at the same time I also hate how you won't wipe my ass for me."

Betty: "It's like I'm inventing new ways to be worthless."

Ignacio: "Now that I am suddenly infirm and have lost my formerly agile mind, I'm going to get a nurse."

Betty or Hilda, who cares anymore: "But we can't afford that! I sell candles/am supporting a schizophrenic receptionist!"

Ignacio: "I went to the Medicaid office and found out that they'll help pay for a part-time nurse. The More You Know."

Betty: "Okay, let's stop fighting."

Hilda: "Okay, I forgive you. For having a job and a life and career of your own, something your sister and father *simply refuse to do*. Which is also your fault."

Betty: "It feels good to be forgiven for working hard to get the basic shit all people deserve."

Wili brings Marc a watch or something from the Franco-Teutonic client, and he calls her out for being gross with him earlier. She explains to him that it's normal human behavior, and instead of explaining that it actually is not, tries to explain the concept of being humiliated. She makes the somewhat valid point that they aren't there to be pitched by an assistant, they're there to get a pitch from Wilhelmina Slater. Which, Marc points out, wouldn't have even happened if she'd keep those knees together and stop ignoring her job and responsibilities for her new calling of acting like a whore. Because this show agrees that Wili having sex is evil and leads to madness, she offers to fire Marc and that straightens him up right quick.

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Meanwhile, in an even less interesting scene, Molly sees herself on Page Six. This is terrifying because if Connor sees it, he will know that Molly owns a bikini, or that beaches exist, and then he will break up with her *even more breaky-uppier* than he already did and will move on to his new relationship *even more move-onnier* than he already has. Daniel's like, "Oh my God, what a serious problem this supposedly is, although you wouldn't know it from my nap-like demeanor" and Molly's like, "If I could possibly summon the energy to care about any of this, I would be having some serious anxiety right now." Then Connor sees the picture and investigates it more closely, because she's wearing a one-piece and holding somebody's hand in that picture, and how dare she when he's fucking Wili all over the building.

Wili takes off for lunch with Tom Ford and tosses Marc the opportunity to lead an ad meeting, because one paragraph ago he educated her in the ways of the human heart. I love Tom Ford, but I don't want him around my food.

"Cable we can totally just steal from upstairs. Oh, and we both have cell phones, so we don't need a landline, plus I gave that number out to too many weirdos anyway... There's electric and gas and maintenance and Bergdorf's. God, it is so hard to know which one to sacrifice, you know?" Betty says some portentous thing about how she has to tell Amanda something, but Amanda already knows: she is moving out. And why? No reason whatsoever. "Because your family needs you right now... And you're good like that."

But this show's not. So toward the end of March, they're putting this show on hold for a couple months so they can do an hour-long comedy block before [Meredith/Addison](#), because [30 Rock](#) finally won enough awards that the clueless old white dudes who run the entire universe were like, "Comedies with strong female characters and critical acclaim? Sounds good on a Thursday night." And I don't know if you've ever seen [Samantha Who?](#), but it's recommended.

Have you seen it? It's about a girl trying as hard as she can to be kind to those around her while figuring out what she wants her life to be like. She's innocent in some ways, naïve even, but she has insight into the human heart that gives her the upper hand. Her family is a piece of work, but she loves them, no matter how much she's got going on. She doesn't want to be materialistic, but she does love shiny things and bright colors. She gets in over her head all the time, and spends as much time cleaning up messes as she does making them. Some of her friends are shallow and scary, but that's only because they're hiding depths you'll be excited to learn about slowly, over time. She is a good person, a woman with faults, and areas of blindness, but an accompanying faith in herself and in others that is as inspiring to watch as her wry sense of humor, her belief in fighting for what's right, and her capacity for joy.

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Sound like anybody you used to know?